

PC Update

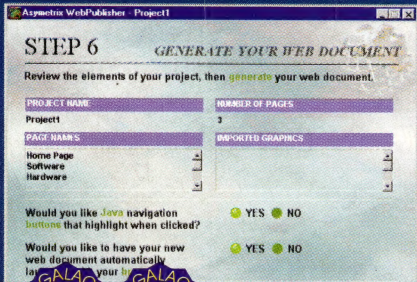
March 1997

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COMMUNICATIONS

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Navigating a BBS



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John Gould's Birds of Australia
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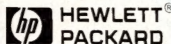
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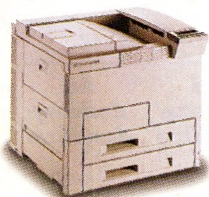
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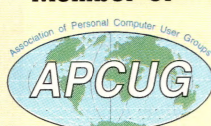
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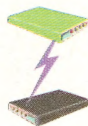
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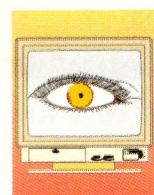
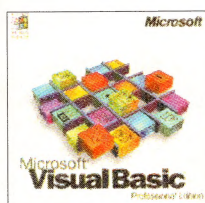
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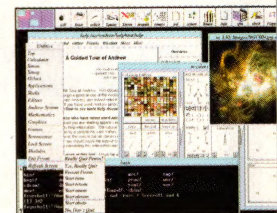


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June	Information Management (Database, PIMs, Spreadsheets)	5 May	7 May	9 May	30 May
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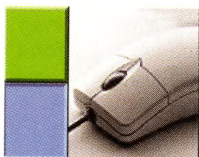
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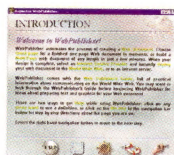
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WORKING WRITER'S WORDS

Carol Daniels



The theme this month is communications. When the *PC Update* team met last year to set the themes for 1997, we expected this to be an interesting issue and we were right. Communications generates a lot of interest amongst our members. For that matter, it's not just our members that are interested in electronic communications

It's almost everyone—as even a casual scan of any commercial publication will show. We had a most respectable number of members put their hands up to volunteer to write something for this issue. (So much so that some articles are being held over to use in future months, including my wrap-up on the Fall APCUG vendor presentations).

It hasn't always been that way. In fact it wasn't that long ago that "bulletin boards" conjured up images of push pins—not modems—for the average computer user.

As with most subjects the scope of our members' interests is wide and diverse. Where once connecting to a BBS defined comms for the PC hobbyist, today we're connecting to bulletin boards, the Internet and, increasingly intranets. What we're doing once we connect is even more varied, from sending messages, to getting files, doing research, playing games, having meetings, buying books, listening to music, and even making phone calls. The list grows longer every day.

Whatever the specific task, we share the desire to communicate better and faster. We're looking for ways to cut down on our frustration and improve our efficiency. If we pay attention while we're searching for answers to those questions, we're discovering ways to do things we never dreamt of being able to do with our computers.

How many of us knew what a web browser was five years ago? How many of use have a web browser on our desktops today? The web isn't just the most common metaphor used to describe access to information in today's computing environment. It's what made the Internet accessible to the average computer user. Contrary to much of what is written in the popular press, the Internet isn't synonymous with the World Wide Web, not by a long shot. Even so,

for many of today's computer users, it's the Web that made the Internet come alive.

Of course not everyone is excited about the Internet. Some of our members have no interest in comms or the various types of "nets." Others are turned off by the whole concept, although sometimes this is the result of confusing the tool with its uses.

But as a group, it's safe to say that we are interested in electronic communication, or what we can do with it. No matter what we want to do with in the process, connect to a BBS, access a remote file server, shop on line, check a bank balance, or make a phone call, for all but the most techno-savvy amongst us, making and maintaining a connection can seem to have more in common with black magic than physics.

It's almost in spite of its history as one of the more arcane branches of computing activities (and the language of modems and electronic communication does much to preserve that legacy) that communications has developed into a major draw card for newcomers to the world of computers.

It's easy to forget the (relative) ease of today's electronic communication when you can't connect, and you can't figure out why. That's one of the reasons the following message on the Melb PC BBS caught my eye.

*From: Stan Horvat
To: John Cumming
Subject: Assistance*

*Hi John,
Thought I'd drop you a line to thank you for giving me so much of your time on chat mode last week and helping me in resolving my ABC-MODEM problem. I wanted you to know that I tried your suggestion of using the ATZ command. I ended up editing the "init." line in host mode setup of XXX software and the modem now works perfectly on voice, fax and data under host mode. After each call, the modem resets itself ready for the next call.*

BTW, the latest advice I received from ABC (USA) was that XXX software may be having a conflict with my 'puter and that I should try an alternative software package. The technicians at ZYX-Modem

Sellers (ABC-Modem's distributors) still don't know what the problem is. Just comes to show what great value the Melb PC User Group membership is. Once again, thank you for your help. Cheers.

When I saw this message I immediately wrote to the author asking him if I could use it in *PC Update*. To me it captures the essence of Melb PC...

...users helping users...

That's what we're about. Everything the group does reflects back on that motto. That's the attraction of membership and that's what makes user groups unique. Everyone has the opportunity to participate. Everyone has something to contribute. Today I help someone. Tomorrow someone will help me.

I urge members to keep that motto in mind, when they use the BBS, take a course, or read *PC Update*. As you look for help, keep your eyes open for ways you can help others.

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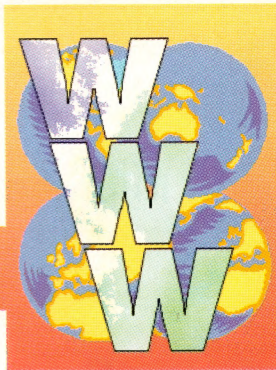
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Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer

A COMPARISON

Chris Ewing



The battle between Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer for the hearts and minds of web surfers, has been raging for some years now. If you're just now starting to use the web, you may be confused by the minefield of information and arguments between the two sides. Both claim that their product is faster, more secure and easier to use. The purpose of this article is to give you a starting point, so you can make your own evaluation of the two. The hope is that with information about the similarities and differences between the two, you'll be able to make the best decision for your needs.

For this article, I used the most recent versions available at January 22 1997. However, readers should take into account that both products are updated regularly. The latest versions can be downloaded from sites such as <http://www.netscape.com> for Netscape Navigator, and <http://www.microsoft.com> for Microsoft Internet Explorer. Local Mirror sites should be checked first, before downloading from these busy sites. Melb PC users will usually be able to download the latest versions of either

product from our BBS, or purchase from our Shareware Library, soon after each update.

There are a few differences between the two products' user interfaces. But not many. One is the fact that Internet Explorer has two identical "favourites" menus, one on the toolbar, one on the menu bar, which seems unnecessary (Figure 1).

Netscape's interface (Figure 2) has three toolbars which can be hidden and recalled easily. It also has a handy list of links to useful places within Netscape's site and a toolbar with icons leading to the mailbox, the hypertext editor, the web browser and the newsgroup reader, which I found easier to use than Microsoft's system.

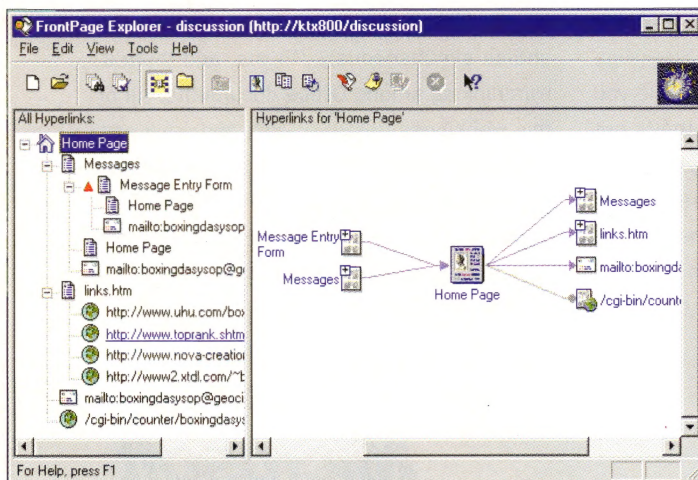
If you want to publish information on the web, Netscape's product comes with a built-in hypertext editor. Document templates for the editor are stored on Netscape's web site, not on your hard drive. That can be inconvenient when you're writing hypertext documents and your computer is not connected to the Internet. Apart from that, however, I found it a very user-friendly editor for my simple web publishing requirements.

evaluation copies

for both are

available free

Internet Explorer doesn't include a hypertext editor. Microsoft's hypertext editor, FrontPage, is a commercial product, retailing for around \$269. Frontpage's document templates are stored locally, as are the help files. That makes offline editing of hypertext documents much easier. Another difference is that FrontPage is web-centric. FrontPage treats entire sites as documents. Netscape Composer treats individual hypertext



Figures 1 (above) and 2 (below).



Figure 3.

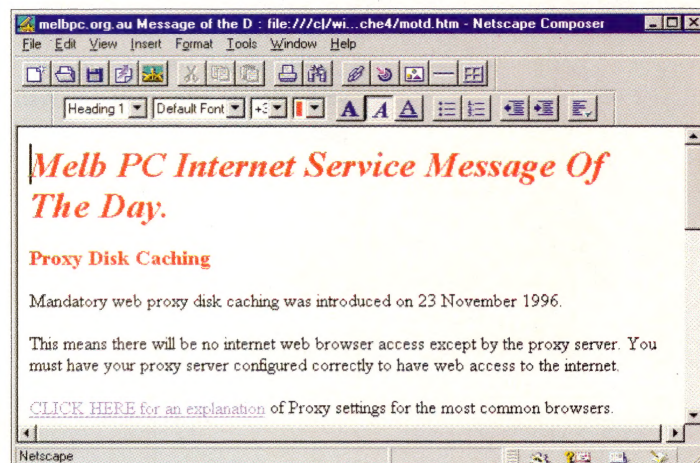


Figure 4.

pages as documents. Figure 3 illustrates FrontPage's interface, showing all the pages in the open web and their connecting hyperlinks.

Netscape's Composer is set out like a conventional word processor (Figure 4). The editing process is similar to that of the FrontPage editor, but pages must be opened, saved and edited individually, which could become tedious when creating and managing large sites.

Note, if you're running MS Word 95, a free plug-in, "Internet Assistant for MS Word" is available from Microsoft's web site (Melb PC members can download it from our BBS). Internet Assistant for MS Word is similar to (though not quite as sophisticated as) Netscape's Composer. If you're running Word 97, you can write your hypertext documents there.

Bookmarking and favourites

Both programs have a system for keeping track of world wide web pages you have visited, so they will be easier to find at a later date. When you visit a site, you can choose to have the program record the page's URL (address) and store it for later recall. Netscape's system is called "bookmarking" and it makes a hypertext bookmark file (BOOKMARK.HTM), in which all the details for all the pages you've visited and "bookmarked" are recorded.

Internet Explorer creates a folder called "favourites" in your Windows directory.

Within that folder, Internet Explorer creates a separate file for each web page you've recorded as a favourite.

Although I found both systems worked similarly, when working inside the program, moving a Netscape bookmark to the Internet Explorer folder can be difficult, unless you know exactly what you are doing.

On the other hand, if you're using Internet Explorer you can place Internet shortcuts on your desktop. Making the page accessible directly from the desktop, rather than having to manually open the program and selecting the correct favourite file.

Although little things like that might seem trivial, connect time costs money, so even a little bit of time saved can make a big difference. This also explains why both Netscape and Microsoft put a lot of effort into impressing customers about the speed of their products.

Which is the best?

In the end, picking a favourite is largely a matter of personal taste, work style and opinion. When you need to decide between the two, I recommend you try both. See which you prefer. You may even find that you like both, for different reasons, or different types of sites, and want to own both.

Both Netscape and Microsoft make it easy for you to evaluate their products. Netscape makes copies available for

Table 1.

	Netscape Communicator	Microsoft Internet Explorer
Download size (Bytes)	9,413,342	10,357,320
Cost	Professional edition US\$79	Mail & news client, Browser \$0
	Standard Edition US\$49	Frontpage A\$269 (approx)
	Upgrade for those with Netscape Subscription US\$29	

evaluation purposes at no cost, whereas Internet Explorer is free.

After collecting the information and doing my evaluations, I decided that I preferred Netscape Communicator's interface and found its hypertext editor easier to master, for my simple purposes. My preference might have been different if I were trying to create, or view, larger or more complex web sites. As they say on the Internet, "Your mileage may vary." The most important advice I can give you is not to be drawn into one of those endless arguments about which product is "better." Once you know what the differences and similarities between the products are, and have some idea of your needs, you're going to be the best person to choose between the them. □

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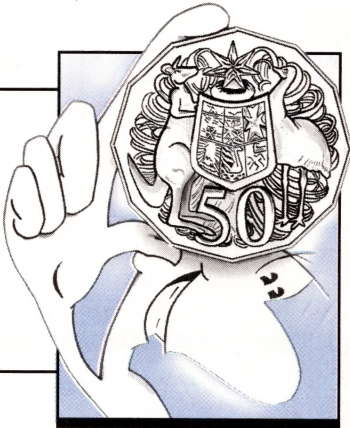
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▲GRUTZ 1675

John Gould's Birds of Australia

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Info Box

John Gould's Birds of Australia

Minimum system requirements

- Multimedia PC
- 8 MB RAM
- 10 MB free hard disk space
- CD-ROM drive
- Windows-compatible sound card
- Windows 3.1x or Windows 95
- Microsoft-compatible mouse
- Screen driver 640 x 480, 256 colours

Availability and cost

Distributed by

RAOU (Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union)

Ph: (03) 9882 2622

RRP: \$79.00 or available to Melb PC User Group members only, direct from the producer at 10% discount.

Protavis Productions

PO Box 135, East Brunswick VIC 3057

e-mail: hgibbs@melbpc.org.au

Imagine that most people with a lively interest in nature, and in bird life in particular, will have seen at least some reproductions of Gould's famous plates of Australian birds. It is equally likely that very few will have seen copies of all 681 plates that appeared in Gould's eight volume folio works of the *Birds of Australia* (1840-1848) and his *Supplement* (1869), since even the facsimiles are worth well in excess of \$1000.

This locally produced CD-ROM offering makes Gould's works much more accessible. It reproduces all the folio works and incorporates text from his *Handbook to the Birds of Australia*. The disc also includes a brief biography of John Gould and maps and photographs of the areas in which he travelled during his visit to Australia from September 1838 to April 1840.

You need to install the disc before use. Less than 1 MB of hard disk space is used, but you need at least ten times this amount to allow for temporary file creation while running the program from the CD-ROM.

Using the program

The program has been designed around the Asymetrix resource *Multimedia Toolbook* and has a natural flow. A *How to use* section provides all the instructions you will need to scan and control the output, but essentially you simply use

**will be popular
amongst keen
bird enthusiasts
and admirers
of John Gould**

the right mouse button to access a popup menu, the left mouse button to show picture (or text) full screen and left and right arrow keys to move between pages. The up and down arrows show and hide the toolbar, while Alt+F4 triggers the exit from the program.

The major format is a 640 x 480 display of each Australian bird in the series, together with a scrollable text section. Left-clicking generates full screen versions of the picture or text, as required.

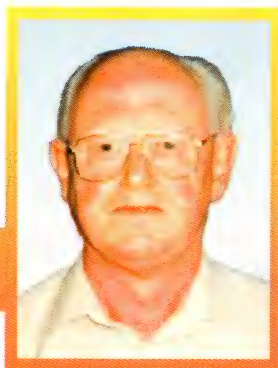


Figure 1. The opening screen.



Figure 2. White Ibis, plate and text.

Bob Burt



The bird reproductions are in either vertical or horizontal format, depending on how Gould created the originals. The horizontal format birds are reproduced in the "bird plus text" display in a sideways position, but are generated in proper horizontal format in the full screen versions. However, this format has the advantage that its full screen version is of the entire plate. Unfortunately, many of the birds (particularly the raptors) are in vertical format, which, while giving a more natural-looking appearance for the combined "bird plus text" display, means that the full screen version of each bird has less than half the content of the original plate. It would have been well worth the trouble to have made all these pictures scrollable, as indeed has been done, of necessity, for the text portions.

The text is extensive and contains the species numbers and names as given by Gould. Many of these have been changed subsequently, but the

current common name is included in the toolbar for each species. However, it is disappointing that there is no facility for printing out the information.

The toolbar gives access to all the major components of the program, including help, the main book, the biography, the maps of Gould's travels and a full text search facility. The popup menu includes a very useful *Choose species* listing of the common names of all the described birds.

The introduction to the program and one of the illustrated birds (the Short-tailed Shearwater) provide the tantalising addition of bird sounds to the repertoire. Further examples would have been much appreciated.

Conclusion

Despite the limitations I have outlined, this CD-ROM is of good quality and will be popular amongst keen bird enthusiasts and admirers of John Gould's Australian works.



Figure 3. White Ibis, plate only.

Sp. 539. THRESKIORNIS STRICTIPENNIS.

WHITE IBIS.

Ibis strictipennis, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part v. p. 106.
Yam-bull-bull, Aborigines of Port Essington.
Black-necked Ibis, Colonists of Port Essington.
White Ibis of the Colonists of New South Wales.

Threskiornis strictipennis, Gould, *Birds of Australia*, fol. vol. vi. pl. 46.

The same cause that induced the Straw-necked Ibis (*Carphibis spinicollis*) to visit New South Wales in such abundance during the year 1839 acted equally on the present bird, which was not only observed at the same period, but the two species were frequently seen in company; one marked difference, however, was noticed, namely, that while the *Carphibis spinicollis* visited equally the lagoons and the plains, the *Threskiornis strictipennis* confined itself solely to the wet hollows of flats, the banks of rivers, lagoons, &c., wading knee-deep among the rushes and green herbage in search of frogs, newts, and insects, upon which it feeds; when satiated it mounted upon the bare branches of the large gum-trees bordering the feeding-place, and then became so watchful that it could not be approached within gun-shot without

Figure 4. White Ibis, text only.

What Gould collected

At the end of eight months in Australia, Gould's collection consisted on '800 specimens of birds, 70 of quadrupeds (several of which are new), more than 100 specimens preserved whole in spirits, and the nests and eggs of above 70 species of birds, together with the skeletons of all the principal forms'. At the conclusion of his visit to Australia, he had collected and made notes on most of Australia's known bird species and in addition had discovered over 300 new species. A hundred of these 'new' species, however, were later reduced to the category of subspecies.

Menu

Book



Figure 6. Phillip Island Parrot.

Figure 5. Gould's collection.

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



CorelWEB.GRAPHICS SUITE helps you create truly stunning Web pages with all sorts of bells and whistles. It's so easy to insert lots of all-singing, all-dancing elements into your pages, that you need to severely exercise your judgement not to go overboard. The suite includes Java support and you can also use the six main

applications for non-Web publishing (although Corel doesn't tell you that!).

Bundled with the suite is O'Reilly's WebSite 1.1, a Web server (for Windows 95 or Windows NT). WebSite enables you to keep track of and preserve the integrity of your Web links, and control access to your pages. Also included is a customised AT&T version of Netscape Navigator 2, with Internet access provided through AT&T WorldNet Service—although this is not of much use in Australia.

Info Box

CorelWEB.GRAPHICS SUITE

Minimum system requirements

- 486DX/33 processor
- 8 MB RAM
- Windows 3.1
- CD-ROM drive
- VGA display
- Mouse or tablet
- 46 MB free hard disk space for full installation

Availability and cost

Available from most Corel retailers. Contact Corel Customer Service Centre on 1800 658 850.

You can download a free 30-day trial copy of CorelWEB.DESIGNER from <http://www.corel.com/text/corelweb/webdesigner/index.htm>

RRP \$369

The Applications

CorelWEB.DESIGNER

CorelWEB.DESIGNER is the cornerstone that binds pieces created in the other applications. The interface is the familiar WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) word processor style. You type text and create tables much as you would in a word processor, then insert images, sounds, animations, video and Java applets as required. You don't need to learn HTML code, but you can view and edit it directly if you wish. You can also add background sound, although this is one situation where you need to delve into HTML code.

DESIGNER supports all common Web formatting styles as well as many HTML 3.0 Netscape and Microsoft Internet Explorer extensions (although not frames.) There is a spell checker, cut and paste function, and find and replace feature.

it's easy

to create

attractive,

compelling

Web pages

While DESIGNER is easy to use, the menus, status bar and help file employ HTML rather than word-processing terminology; numbered and bulleted lists, for example, are called ordered and unordered lists. This may make it difficult for novices to use the online help effectively. DESIGNER also lacks some of the flexibility of a true-blue word processor; it makes little use of the right mouse button, for

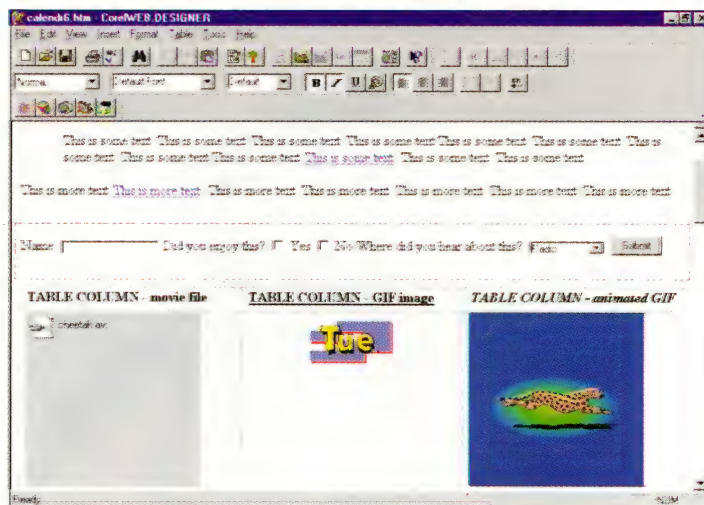


Figure 1a. Sample effects with CorelWEB.DESIGNER.

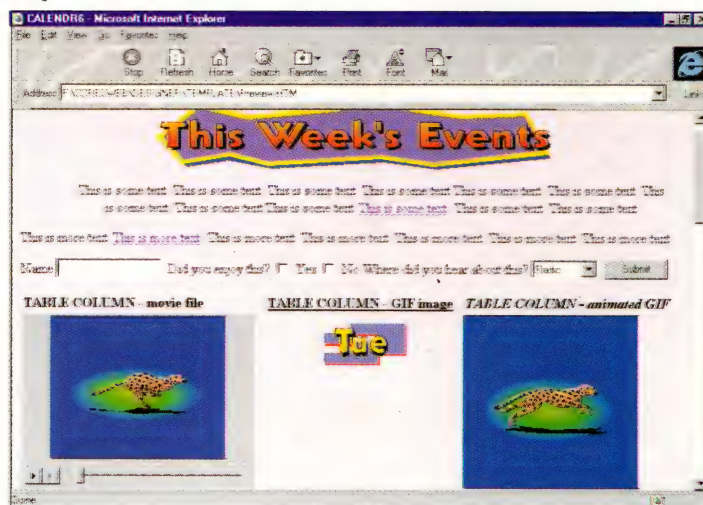


Figure 1b. Browser view of figure 1a.



Figure 2. CorelWEB.Transit main screen.

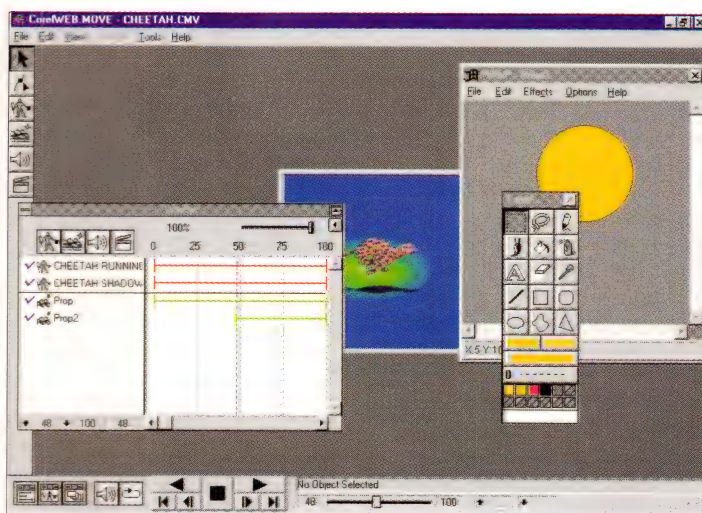


Figure 3. Creating an animation in CorelWEB.MOVE.

example, and lacks many standard word-processing features.

Adding bookmarks and hyperlinks to text and images only takes a couple of clicks. Hyperlinks can reference other Web pages, online newsgroups, e-mail addresses and, in fact, any information located on an Internet or Intranet server. You can embed hyperlinks in tables and create forms for purposes such as visitor feedback. Image mapping features enable you to link parts of an image to different URLs. To test and preview your page, you

send it along to your browser.

DESIGNER comes with over 120 truly eye-catching templates, although Corel will hopefully add a template preview feature to the next version, as well as multidocument support.

CorelWEB.Transit

CorelWEB.Transit converts existing word processing and graphic files into Web documents, meaning that you only need a single source document for paper and Web publishing. Templates specify how Transit converts each element or style of

the source document; for example, you can format headings differently in your Web document, or add backgrounds. Transit can create hyperlinked tables of contents and navigation buttons automatically, and split large files into multiple pages. It imports documents directly from WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, Ami Pro and Rich Text Format, and if you need more flexibility or power, there is an upgrade path to HTML Transit.

Transit worked well in my tests; the only

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problem I encountered was misaligned graphics, something easily corrected when opening the file in DESIGNER.

CorelWEB.MOVE

To make your pages really shine, you can use CorelWEB.MOVE—which is basically CorelMOVE 5 with the addition of some Web tools—to create animated sequences with full sound effects. You create actors, props and sounds, or use any of the 2000 pre-designed ones, and control them with paths, timelines and cues. Alternatively, you can create actors or props in CorelWEB.DRAW then copy or import them to MOVE. Animations can be simple, one-character sequences or complex, interactive displays in which users control the action with the keyboard or mouse. Once completed, you can publish your animation as an animated GIF, movie or

Java applet, then insert it into a DESIGNER page.

CorelWEB.DRAW

CorelWEB.DRAW is the drawing module of CorelDRAW 5 (reviewed by Ash Nallawalla, *PC Update*, June 1994) with Web tools added. You create or edit drawings using standard DRAW 5 features, then define hotspots which you link to URLs. Hotspots can encompass discrete or multiple drawing objects, or you can use the URL Drawing Tools to create hotspots on any part of a drawing. Once completed, you can publish your drawing in various Web-ready formats, including Barista (Corel's Java-based vector graphic format, which supports scaling and text searches).

CorelWEB.WORLD

You can create interactive three-dimensional worlds with CorelWEB.WORLD and take

visitors on guided tours amidst background music. WORLD complies with the VRML 1.0 standard, although you don't need to know the first thing about VRML to use it. Creating a world is basically a matter of drawing boxes then cutting out spaces for windows, doors and so on. You then decorate walls, ceilings and floors with colours, wallpapers, pictures, movies and albums, and attach hyperlinks to any picture, album or movie. The suite includes over 100 pre-designed worlds.

CorelWEB.GALLERY

CorelWEB.GALLERY (reviewed in *PC Update*, August 1996) is a file manager that displays files as thumbnails (graphics) or icons (non-graphics). It includes 7500 images in Internet-ready GIF and JPEG formats, including an abundance of decorative elements such as backgrounds, buttons, bullets and arrows. The main attraction is 120 theme sets consisting of matching banners, bullets, dividers and buttons to help you create aesthetically pleasing Web pages.

Assessment

The six applications in the suite complement each other well, even though they are all separate, stand-alone programs and the seams are clearly visible. Applications have inconsistent menus, different ways of doing things and different help structures. Many functions overlap; for example, you can map images in either DESIGNER or DRAW. Some

programs overcome the limitations of others; for instance, you can use DRAW to space a series of graphics, then insert the whole into DESIGNER. This approach means that the main application, DESIGNER, maintains its simplicity, and you need only learn as much of the other applications as you require.

A handbook gives a brief overview of each application, but is mostly devoted to illustrating the images and fonts included in the package. Each application has its own online help and most have a tutorial of one kind or another, although the quality of the these varies greatly, making some applications a little difficult to learn. I was unable to open some of the sample files and could not locate a QuickTour referred to by the handbook. DESIGNER also has an option on its help menu which takes you to the CorelWEB.GRAPHICS SUITE Web page where you can download free product updates, tutorials and other related software.

The main application, DESIGNER, is a fairly straightforward program, and you can learn as much or as little of the other programs in CorelWEB.GRAPHICS SUITE as you need. However much you learn about the individual programs, it's easy to create attractive, compelling Web pages. If you don't have the time, inclination or artistic ability to create your own designs from scratch, you can easily modify one of the many templates or sample files.

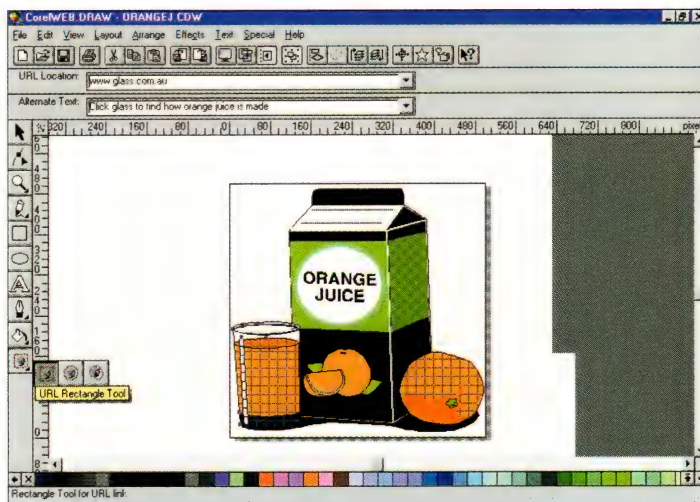


Figure 4. Mapping an image to URL addresses in CorelWEB.DRAW.

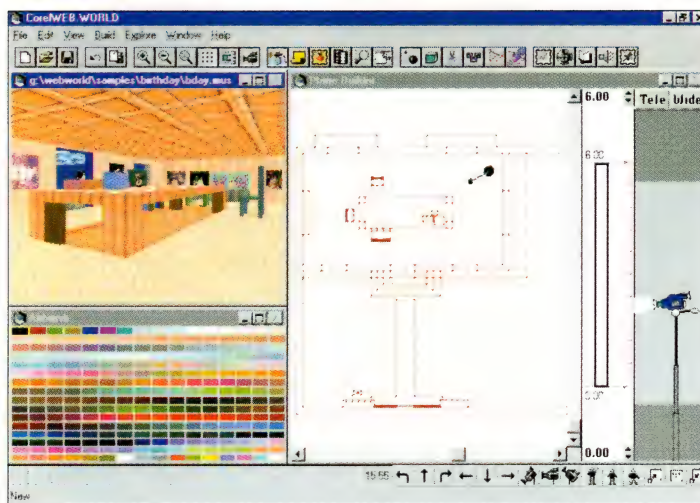


Figure 6. CorelWEB.WORLD main screen.



Figure 6. CorelWEB.GALLERY main screen.

Microsoft IntelliMouse

HARDWARE REVIEW

Asb Nallawalla



My original Microsoft Mouse, circa 1985, is still in use daily. It was a bus mouse and came with its own internal card. My later serial mice purchases included a couple of Asian cheapies that had to be thrown out, and I have gone back to Microsoft for later purchases at home and work. I neither liked losing a card slot for a bus mouse nor a COM port to a serial rodent, so I am happy to report that these trivial peeves have now been overcome.

Microsoft has launched its latest mouse, dubbed the *IntelliMouse*. It is identical to the existing design other than the addition of a recessed **wheel** between the two buttons. The wheel can also be depressed just as if it were a third mouse button. This wheel and button are exploited in some new applications such as Office 97 to provide advanced navigational abilities. As more and more PCs feature a PS/2 port (the old bus mouse port), this mouse has a PS/2 connector and an adapter for those wishing to use it with a 9-pin serial port.

IntelliPoint

To use the mouse wheel and button, the supplied *IntelliPoint* software (one 3.5-inch disk) must be installed. This software only operates on Windows 95 and Windows NT 3.51 or later. Without this software the mouse operates as any other two-button Microsoft mouse, so little more can be said about the mouse itself. IntelliPoint makes this mouse more efficient across *all* application environments, whereas the wheel and button operate only if the software is designed for them. The accompanying manual covers a record ten languages, but only seven pages are in English.

Features

IntelliPoint has 16 options, some of which we have seen before, others are new. I've marked the ones I like with a "thumb-up" symbol (even if I don't use them):

- 👍 **Button Selection** Sets the primary button, such as setting the right button for a left-handed user.
- 👍 **ClickLock** A single click can lock the mouse button so that you can (for example) drag a selection without fear of dropping it at the wrong place. A second click releases it.
- 👍 **ClickSaver** Enables a single-click to do the job of a double-click.
- 👍 **Double-Click Speed** Enables the interval between two clicks to be adjusted.
- 👍 **Focus** Moving the pointer above a window makes it "active" without having to click in it.
- 👍 **Odometer** Measures the distance your pointer has travelled across your screen.
- 👍 **Orientation** Defines which way is "up" for the way you hold the mouse.
- 👍 **Pointer Speed** Changes the speed at which the pointer moves on the screen in relation to the mouse movement.
- 👍 **PointerWrap** Moves the pointer to the opposite side of the screen when it goes "off the edge" (not available in Windows NT).
- 👍 **SmartSpeed** Slows down the pointer as you approach icons, buttons, and other controls.
- 👍 **SnapTo** Moves pointer to the default button when you open a dialog box.
- 👍 **Sonar** Pressing the Ctrl key displays concentric circles around your pointer.
- 👍 **Trails** Displays a comet-like fading trail when you move the pointer (not available in Win NT).

- 👍 **Vanish** Hides the pointer when you type.
- 👍 **Wheel** Enables the wheel (depends on application).
- 👍 **Wheel Button** Enables the wheel button (depends on application).

To appreciate these features, you should

exploited in some new applications such as Office 97

be using multiple open windows on a 21-inch or 17-inch monitor with at least 800 x 600 resolution. If you only have one window visible at a time, you might not be working efficiently.

Some of the features looked attractive initially. *SnapTo*, *Focus* and *PointerWrap* present the risk that your pointer is no longer where you thought you left it. This may depend on the nature of your work; In an e-mail application, I wanted the pointer to sit above the "Next" button, whereas *SnapTo* took it to the "Save" button, which happened to be the default. *Odometer* sounds like it escaped from a "PowerToys" package and may interest an occupational health professional. The other features will appeal to most users.

The wheel

Office 97 mentions the IntelliMouse just once in the manual—the wheel button when clicked serves to scroll the open document slowly or rapidly depending on the position of a special pointer in the vertical scroll bar. This could provide an "AutoCue" facility for your next speech, although most of us will find it useful to scroll through a long document without wearing out the index finger. The Help file is more comprehensive; rotating the wheel with the Ctrl key depressed makes the page zoom in or out. All the Office 97 applications use these features in a similar fashion. You can also exploit the wheel and its button in Internet Explorer and possibly other new Microsoft products. The Outlook Help file mentions its use for people with disabilities but I feel that all users will find these features useful.

Availability

My IntelliMouse came bundled with Office 97 (a limited promotion) but it is sold separately for \$99. □



CLUB PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Stan Johnstone



Last month I mentioned that 1997 promises to be a very exciting year for Melb PC. Some of the new activities have already started, and work on some other changes have already commenced or are in hand. Although the new committee has only met a few times, already it is working together to improve both the short- and long-time prospects of Melb PC.

BBS

Throughout the world many BBSs have been closing down as more users tend to use the Internet for obtaining files, patches, and messaging. The BBS has always been a free service for Melb PC members, and we intend to keep it that way.

As a source of files it is much faster and cheaper both for you and Melb PC if it can be obtained locally rather than obtaining yet another copy from the other side of the world.

In recent years the success of Melb PC's BBS has been the result of the devoted service provided by **Barry McMenomy** and his team. As with earlier systems, Barry stretched the current Maximus system to its limit and beyond to give you the BBS we currently enjoy. However the writers of Maximus have decided not to develop or support it any further and consequently we must change if we are to continue.

Of the current systems available, Wildcat appears to be the best available capable of performing all the tasks we currently enjoy. It also has some additional features we hope to be able to introduce

later in the year. **Jean D'Andrea** is driving the BBS team in this work, and they are aided by **Allan Michelmore** and others who already have gained experience on this software elsewhere. All this should help to expedite the changeover.

There is an enormous task to be carried out transferring files, creating a new user database, etc, all of which will occur over the next couple of months. Obviously there will be a period of transition as the new system is phased in and the old phased out, so a little patience may be necessary.

The BBS is an important resource for Melb PC members, which is provided free, and I recommend those who have not already used it to call it up today and give it a try.

Internet

At the February committee meeting it was resolved to increase the daily access time for users. From 1 March 1997, the daily access time will be increased from 90 minutes a day to 120 minutes.

In addition it will be permitted for other Melb PC Family Members to share the one account for an additional charge of only \$5 each. For legal reasons we must have the signature of each member using the one account—each user name is one account (just in case you were thinking of the possibility using separate user names). As before, users who allow their Internet account to be used by any unauthorised person will have their account cancelled. Sorry about that.

Naturally this additional access time will increase the load on our resources, and approval has been given for the purchase of additional lines. The additional lines will probably use an ISDN link to a Remote Annex instead of the conventional phone lines and modems. As well as being marginally cheaper, this new technology will also enable us to handle the higher speed modems that are expected to become available later this year.

Another aspect of this increased access time will be the increased cost for the traffic flowing through our system which is being charged to us on a volume basis. We will try to reduce some of this cost by adding to our current caching

equipment still further and so increase our capacity and reliability in this area.

As a result of the increased cost of our link charges, together with the investment in some additional equipment, it has been decided that we will have to increase our annual Internet subscription from the current \$120 to \$140. We are still providing the cheapest service around, and the increased benefits will be worth much more than the \$20 increase.

The good news for all users whose Internet subscription is still current is that you will enjoy the increased access time as part of your old subscription until it falls due for renewal.

By the way—have you tried the new Melb PC Internet Kit? At the end of January more than 650 copies had been downloaded from the BBS, and over 180 sets of diskettes sold by Shareware. Do yourself a favour and upgrade now!

Orientation day

The first of our orientation days was held on Saturday 1 February 1997 with 43 members and 2 nonmembers attending. The non-members were presented with a small gift together with a membership application form, and we hope they put both of these items to good use. Come to think of it, I don't think anyone went away empty-handed.

There was no hard sell, just an explanation of all the benefits Melb PC members can obtain, have a good look around at the training facilities, and see for themselves the flashing lights on the modems for the Internet and the BBS and other equipment.

One member remarked that he had been a member for five years, yet he had learned more about Melb PC in those two hours than in the previous five years. From this one comment we believe that this is a worthwhile exercise, and we will continue to run these at regular intervals as long as there is interest shown.

Because of the Albert Park Grand Prix, we will delay the next of these days until Saturday 15 March 1997 starting at 10 am. Please register at the office on (03) 9699 6222 to ensure it is not booked out, in which case we will arrange for you to attend at another session.



Snowed under. One of our office volunteers, Ray Smith, busy processing member renewals.

Seminar training night

Last month I introduced news of the first of our training sessions to be held in seminar format. Unfortunately this column is being written before that session was held, but even now most places have already been booked.

When I proposed these sessions, I had not had the opportunity to discuss it with all the trainers. Naturally it was with some trepidation that I attended one of their meetings and described what we wanted to do. Their response to the idea was extremely warm, and they immediately launched into a suggested list of topics for future months.

As a result, "Windows 95 for New Users" is the seminar topic for this month with the three-hour session starting at 6.30 pm on Friday 14 March 1997. The cost is just \$15, please make your bookings to the office at (03) 9699 6222. Even after 18 months I still consider myself a "new user" of Windows 95, and I expect this class will be booked out quickly by others like myself, as well as those who have upgraded more recently.

Training

When we look at the subjects covered in our training courses we find that we cover most of the topics being taught at the CAE and TAFE institutions. In addition we cover many of the "hobby" courses

that they do not. We know our training is at least their equal, as some of our trainers work for them also.

The training committee want to know what you would like to see us include in our course list. A survey handout will be distributed at the March monthly meeting to help them plan for future months. For those unable to attend, this survey will be available on the BBS and on the Internet.

Although our excellent training facilities are used just about every evening and most weekends, they are unused most weekdays. In April we will be introducing the first of our one- and two-day courses to be held on weekdays. These will be aimed at our members' individual needs, but we also hope that you may be able to interest your employers to send you and other fellow employees to these courses.

It is anticipated that subjects such as "Quicken for Small Business," etc, will be very attractive to many members and their employers, or even their employees. The weekday classes will be six hours starting at 9.30 am, and lunch will be provided at the lunch break, in addition to the normal class material and notes. Refer to page 27 for details of these courses.

The full price for non-members entitles those attending the one-day courses to enjoy a temporary three-month membership, and the two-day course charges will include a full year's membership.

Special diary dates

- When:** Friday 14 March
6.30 pm
- What:** Seminar-format course:
Windows 95 for New Users
- Length:** Three hours
- Cost:** \$15
- Where:** Melb PC
66 Albert Road
South Melbourne
- Book:** (03) 9699 6222
-
- When:** Saturday 15 March
10.00 am.
- What:** Member's orientation
day—visit the office
and see what goes on
there.
- Length:** About two hours
- Cost:** Free
- Where:** Melb PC
66 Albert Road
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- Book:** (03) 9699 6222

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Reference Letter

Dear Sir



I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your excellent service and advice on our recent computer purchase. We have now purchased two computers, a scanner and a modem from your company and upgraded a third computer. Your expertise and excellent after-sales service and guarantee of items purchased make dealing with your company a pleasure. Please feel free to use myself and company as a reference for future clients as I have no hesitation in recommending you. Yours Faithfully,

Stephen W. Aitken
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My mention last month of our concern about members not receiving copies generated quite a deal of action. As an aside, the February delivery must have been extremely good gauged from the many members who rang and asked for missing past copies.

Possibly I picked the wrong month to write about this as we had many calls from members who had not received the "January" issue. I hope no-one was offended when it was explained that there was no "January" issue. This happens every year with our 11 issues a year, and the previous issue was the combined Dec 96-Jan 97 one.

After all, the last issue was delivered in the second last week in November and that seems an awfully long time ago. The *PC Update* team of volunteers must really look forward to the relief from the stress of deadlines for January each year!

As I explained last month, the *PC Update* team has to work to deadlines to fit in with production dates. Writing this column I am just making the deadline necessary for the team to finalise this edition. If I had been just a couple of days earlier their job would have been made easier.

Although not wanting to step on *PC Update's* territory, I do hear of the problems arising from those who regularly fail to be on time. Might I add my voice to the team and beg that those promised reports, reviews, and regular columns from contributors are prepared well in time for the deadlines set.

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From time to time a few users report problems with slow file/news/mail transfers

In the "early days" this was most often a problem for OS/2 users.

One possible explanation is that the MTU (maximum transmission unit)—basically the maximum packet size—is incompatible between the two transferring computers. This may depend on the speed of the computers.

In a SLIP connection, the MTU is a fixed number input in the winsock.ini (or similar), while the value is negotiated by PPP.

If you consider your transfers are very slow please see:

<http://www.aimnet.com/~jnavas/modem/faq.html#SolarisBug>

(thanks to Ash for this reference)

Follow the suggestions there, and post any comments in *melbpc.general* for discussion.

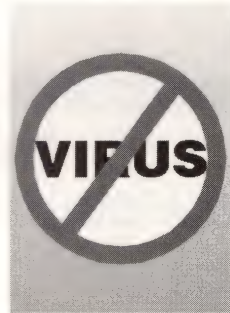


Dr Looi has produced yet another upgrade to his virus-combating program, V-Buster. This upgrade now recognises and can eliminate 10412 identifiable viruses.

Version 8/10412 can now detect and clean files infected by unknown Macro viruses. Dr Looi also tells me that this update detects a new generation of viruses that has struck in several places in Malaysia. These viruses are stealth and mutating types, but they can land in the *middle* of a file without changing its header. Dr Looi estimates successful invasion of files in about 50% of cases and believes that such viruses can only be detected by using low-level language. Appearance of this class of virus explains the issue of this upgrade, which deftly deals with the problem.

I have uploaded a zipped copy of V-Buster 8/10412 to our BBS and it is available as VBUST8U2.ZIP. V-Buster users simply copy the unzipped files to their original (copy-protected) diskettes. As for the previous upgrade, VBUST8U2 can be used as an evaluation copy, which will detect viruses as efficiently as the full version.

but will not actually repair infected boot sectors, partition tables and files.



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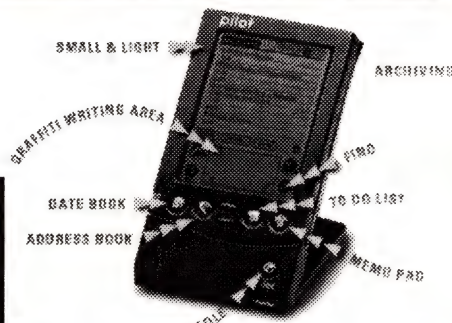


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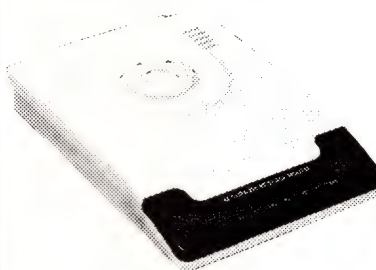
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BASIC basics: Part 2

PROGRAMMING TUTORIAL

John M Graham

Basic
All-purpose
Symbolic
Instruction
Code

Those of you who acted on the suggestion in the previous article and obtained a shareware copy of FirstBAS should now be ready to try something.

First—get to the DOS prompt either directly or through Windows. Unpack FIRSTBAS.ZIP using UNZIP (obtainable from the club BBS) then type INSTALL. The install file that was contained in the package will create a directory POWERBAS and in it a directory FIRSTBAS (and some other directories) and in directory FIRSTBAS it will install compiler FIRSTBAS.EXE and examples and messages.

If you know how to change the PATH, add POWERBAS\FIRSTBAS to your path, otherwise plan to work in directory POWERBAS\FIRSTBAS until you learn more about PATH.

Now go to directory POWERBAS\FIRSTBAS and type

```
REN FIRSTBAS.BAS FB.BAS
```

and press Enter. This gives compiler a short convenient name. Now type

```
FB HANOI
```

and press Enter.

After the screen quits changing, read the message, press any key, then press F9, answer the question, then watch the screen as the program runs—nothing important, just a demonstration.

Press F3 then type

```
WELCOME.TXT
```

and press Enter in the box that appears and read the information. Use the arrow keys to move through the text. Press F3 again and type

```
README.TXT
```

and press Enter in the box and read that information.

Now you can look at any of the files with .BAS or .TXT extensions in directory POWERBAS or any of its subdirectories.

Either stay in directory FIRSTBAS, or include it in your PATH, then type

```
FB [d:filename.ext]
```

and press Enter, where *d:filename.ext* is the complete path and name of the program that you want to look at. Move through the programs using the arrow keys.

At the top of the screen is a line of commands. Try each by holding the Alt key down while pressing the first letter of the command. Try something.

At the bottom of the screen there are function key labels. Try something.

Let's write some programs in BASIC. The examples have comments (called REMarks or marked with ' in FirstBAS—in some old BASICS a ! means *remark*) to explain many of the lines. If you copy

```
'VISA running balance of amount due
do
  read Amnt                'read one item and place in Amnt
  if Amnt = 0 then exit loop 'makes it quit at the end
  Bal = Bal - Amnt          'keeps a running balance
  print Amnt,Bal
loop
' following are amounts on a VISA statement. An arbitrary
' number of pieces of data, separated by commas, on a line
' that starts with the word "data". The last data item must
' be "0" (zero)
data 921.81
data -1500
data 58.02, 24.60, 23.92, 8.54, .55, 53.52
data 109.81, 55.35, 152.36, 498.87, 33.68
data 48.69, 32.44, 44.20, 15.22, 4.16, 0
' Press F9 to run the program.
' If you press F9 again, then it will run again.
' type Alt+X to exit from FIRSTBAS.
' type FB VISA to reload the program
```

Listing 1.

**you should now
be ready to
try something**

the program into your computer the remarks are not required.

There will be a few explanations of editing keys as I go along, but most will be left until later. Be sure you have saved your FIRSTBAS.ZIP file in a safe place then try things. Try using the arrow and other keys between the alpha and the number keys. Try the commands at the top. If you get completely tangled up you can always get out with Ctrl+Alt+Del and then start over again.

The examples to follow (not all in one article) are planned to include:

1. A very simple example to display running balance of a credit card account.
2. An example of a very simple program manipulating numbers for keeping track of a bank balance. Uses slightly more commands than example 1. Later, maybe, a program that includes keeping a running record of FID, BADT, Interest and other income.
3. An example of a program that reads and does things with letters.
4. An example of a program that reads and does things with words. I expect to use the TXT files in the POWERBAS\FIRSTBAS directory for examples 3 and 4.
5. An example of a more complicated program searching for words or groups of words. I expect to use a freeware file of King James version of Bible that I obtained from club many years ago for this example. This makes an excellent concordance.
6. An example of a program that will divide long files into several short files.
7. An example program to do things with records of automobile fuel purchases and odometer reading providing tank is filled every time.

If there is an indication that anyone is still with me at this point, then I will consider requests for other examples and I will try to provide examples for the next more complicated actions—editing in the Integrated Development Environment (IDE), single stepping and similar.

Example 1

The names used for the variables (Amnt and Bal) are from my imagination—use anything you like. If you happen to use a reserved word you will get some sort of an error message. You must use a different variable name to get the program to run.

The program is in Listing 1. To put it in your computer type FB VISA then copy the example. The file VISA.BAS will be created when you reply yes to the SAVE question at exit.

Example 2

Experience will show you that including the data in the program in data statements is poor practice—but great for getting started. Example 2 creates and uses a data file for a bank account.

The file in Listing 2 is an example data file. No comments or lines of any different format are accepted. Make the file using FIRSTBAS by typing

FB BANK.1

and pressing Enter. This creates a file BANK.1 ready for you to put data in. When finished exit using Alt+X. A box displaying a question about saving the file will appear.

Date:

Replace 199 with various letters for different meanings. Never mind why, the explanation is long and not important now. The third and fourth characters are the numerical indication for month, the fifth and sixth characters are the day of the month. The reason for the year, month, day order is for convenience in sorting at some time in the future.

Amount:

Plus or minus for deposit or withdrawal. Keep the decimal points in line for easy reading, but the program reads anything in column 7 to 17 as part of the amount.

Comment:

Column 18 and on is stored verbatim, no action is taken in this program. A later program may give examples of using the comments to select values for running sums of FID or BADT or interest or something else.

Now enter the program in Listing 3, in a similar manner to Listing 1.

When the message End appears on your screen press any key then function key F3. In the box type

RunBal.1

and press Enter and the output file should appear on your screen. Use Ctrl+F3 and your imagination to toggle between the source file, the data file and the output file.

About the author

John M Graham retired several years ago from RMIT where he was a member of the Communications and Electronic Engineering department, teaching subjects related to electronics and engineering applications of computers. He can be contacted on the BBS, (include the middle initial, messages without it go to someone else) or on (03) 9877 0480. □

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j70212	-260.90	Visa
j70216	-100.00	e/b Collins, pay for xx

Listing 2 (above) and Listing 3 (below).

```
'Program RUNBAL.BAS Running Balance
Open "I", 1, "Bank.1"
Open "O", 2, "RunBal.1"
  while not eof(1)
    Line Input #1,s$
    'Open for Input and give it reference number 1
    'Open for output, give it a ref num and name
    'while not at the end of file 1
    'input a line of the data file. The $
    'makes the variable read the input as characters,
    'not as a numeric variable. Such a variable is
    'called a string variable.
    Mo$ = mid$(s$,3,2)
    Dy$ = mid$(s$,5,2)
    Amnt = val(mid$(s$,7,10))
    Cmnt$ = mid$(s$,18,50)
    Bal = Bal + Amnt
    'month is 2 characters starting at 3
    'day is 2 characters starting at 5
    'value of 10 characters starting at 7
    'starting at column 18 all is comment
    print Amnt;tab(12);Bal;tab(24);Dy$;"/";Mo$;" ";Cmnt$
  wend
  'end of while loop
print "End"
'end of program
```

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MEMBER'S LETTER



Y2000 and me

Luke Mawbey

In the article "Y2000 and me," the author mentions that he tried changing the date on his computer clock to 29/02/2000, and found that it accepted the leap year. However, every 400 years I think, there is no leap year. I'm not sure whether it is 100, 200 or 400, but I know for sure that the year 2000 is not a leap year. So all is not well in computing.

Computers aside, how is this going to concern people, and what sort of confusion is this going to generate? It should be an interesting time!

I don't know all the facts concerning this, but it'd be nice to see an article at some stage.

Reply:

We asked our resident puzzle guru about Leap Years—here's his reply.

This time the computer isn't at fault. The rules for Leap Years are

- Every year evenly divisible by four (such as 1996) is a Leap Year.
- *Except* that if the year is a century year—evenly divisible by 100 (such as 1900) it is *not* a Leap Year.
- *Except* that if the year is evenly divisible by 400 (such as 2000) then it *is* a Leap Year.

So from now forward, all years that are evenly divisible by four are leap years until we get to 2100, which isn't one. That's far enough off not to worry most of our readers!

It's all to do with the fact that a "year" (the time it takes the earth to make one complete revolution around the sun) is a bit less than 365.25 "days" (the time the earth takes to spin once on its axis.) According to my copy of MS Encarta the length of a year is actually 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45.5 seconds.

As it happens even the figures above are not accurate enough. The earth's rate of spin is slowing down—but not by much. Every few years the world's time-keepers agree to add a "leap second" into the clock, usually at midnight on 1 January—giving new-year revellers an extra second of partying!

Peter Smith



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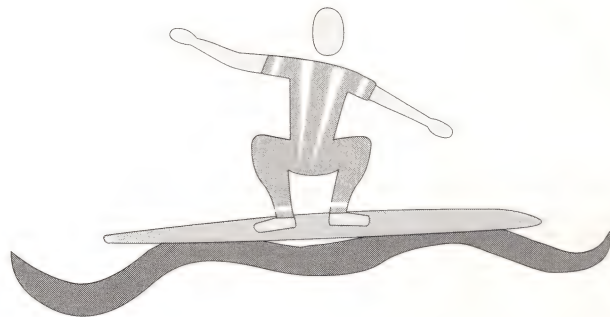
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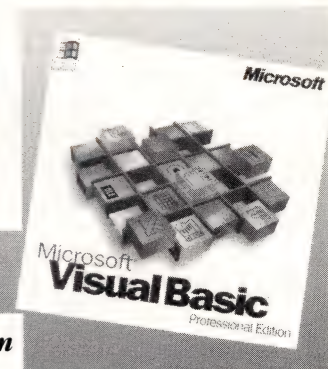
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Seeing the Basics: Finding procedure definitions easily

VB 4 TIPS

Tony Stevenson



This column provides techniques, tips, and tricks to help you gain familiarity and experience with MS Visual Basic: a popular language that enables you to quickly write Windows applications.

Some of Visual Basic's critics argue that it is easy for code to get lost in a VB project, especially as projects become larger and more complex. However, VB 4.0 provides an elegant solution for easily finding procedure definitions.

Consider the following simple program, which includes a function to add two numbers, as well as a subroutine to display a message saying that the program is finished. For this example these two routines are set up in a separate code module (.BAS file) from the one form used in the project. The form itself contains just a single command button used to initiate the addition process. When the program is executed and the command button is clicked, the result of the addition is printed in the top left-hand corner of the form.

```
Private Sub Command1_Click ()
Dim x as Integer, y as
Integer, z as Integer
x = 10
y = 20
z = addTwoNumbers(x, y)
Print z
displayFinished
End
End Sub
```

The following two routines are stored in Module1 of the project.

```
Function addTwoNumbers
(x As Integer, y As Integer)
addTwoNumbers = x + y
End Function

Sub displayFinished ()
MsgBox "We are now finished"
End Sub
```

Imagine now that these routines are part of a much larger project which has been passed on to you to look after. A modification to the program has been requested which involves changing both the addTwoNumbers and displayFinished routines.

One way of locating a function or procedure (in order to edit it) is to use the Find command contained on the Edit menu.

For example, to find the function definition for addTwoNumbers, a lot of VB programmers will double-click on the command button to bring up the code window for the Command1 click event. Next they will highlight the character string addTwoNumbers, click the Edit menu command, then the Find menu option, click the character string addTwoNumbers in the Find What combo box of the Find dialog box (so as to de-select the string), type in "Function " before the function name to be searched for, and finally click the Find Next command button. (Make sure the Search Current Project radio button is also set.)

Whew! This way works but obviously it is a cumbersome approach to locating a function definition.

A better, and preferred way is to use the Procedure Definition command option located under the View main menu option. To see how this works, once again display the contents of the code window for the click event of the command button in our sample project. Highlight the character string addTwoNumbers as before, but this time click the View menu command followed by the Procedure definition option.

The result of the search is that the cursor is now positioned at the start of the addTwoNumbers function, ready for editing.

This same search mechanism works not only for function definitions but also for subroutine definitions as well. Why not try it now with the displayFinished call in the click event of the command button? However, this time use the keyboard shortcut combination of Shift and F2 (after highlighting the character string displayFinished) to make finding this sub procedure definition even easier.

Finally, there is one more technique (tip) for making the process even faster. Instead of highlighting the character string of the function or subroutine definition to be searched for, just position the cursor anywhere in the string before pressing the Shift and F2 keys.

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Bumping your controls

In design mode, the usual practice for resizing controls or moving them is to do so with the mouse. When a control is clicked, its sizing handles automatically appear (these are the small black squares which appear on the border of the selected control).

However, instead of resizing a control by clicking and dragging on one of these black squares, it is possible to "bump" the control to its desired size. This is done by holding down the Shift key on the keyboard and hitting one of the four arrow keys in the required direction. The change in the size of the control is one grid increment / decrement (depending on the direction selected) per each hit of the arrow key.

Likewise, it is possible to bump a control to a new position. Again click the control to be moved to display its sizing handles. To move it, hold down the keyboard Ctrl key instead of the Shift key, and again use the arrow keys to move the control in the desired direction.

Bumping is a convenient and useful way of making small changes in the size of a control, or alternatively, for moving a control a short distance on the interface. The grid which is displayed on a form can be toggled on and off via VB's

design menu structure. Click the Tools menu command, followed by the Options command, and then click the Show Grid check box on the Environment tab.

Get With It!

One of the new statements in VB 4.0 is the With statement. Its generic form is

```
With Object
    Vb statements go here
End With
```

To see the advantages of using this statement set up a sample project containing one form containing two command buttons and a label. It doesn't matter where these controls are placed on the form. Set the caption for the first and second buttons to "Old Way", and "New Way" respectively.

Now set up the code for the project as follows:

```
Private Sub Command1_Click ()
    Label1.Caption = "Old Way Of
    Setting Properties"
    Label1.BorderStyle = 1
    Label1.Left = 3840
    Label1.Top = 0
    Label1.Height = 1000
End Sub
Private Sub Command2_Click ()
```

```
With Label1
    .Caption = "New Way Of
    Setting Properties"
    .BorderStyle = 1
    .Left = 3840
    .Top = 0
    .Height = 1000
End With
End Sub
```

Even though the code in both click events achieves exactly the same result, the new way of coding has definite advantages. Firstly, it increases the readability of the program because of its logical grouping, making it both simpler to follow and easier to change. Secondly, and especially for larger projects, the time to enter code goes down because there is less code to enter.

Be careful though to include the full stops—if any of these are left out, the program will either not work as expected, or will abort issuing the following error message:

"Function call on left-hand side of assignment must return Variant or Object"

E-mail address

Contact Tony Stevenson by e-mail at acsmls@acslink.net.au



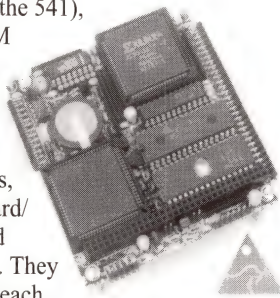
Australian-made Embedded Computers: PC/104 or ISA bus

PC540/1 PC/104 Computers

These computers use the PC/104 bus, an international standard for embedded systems. The X86 instruction sets suit standard PC compilers, or the \$179 Pacific C Compiler. These boards use the 80C188EB and V51 CPUs.

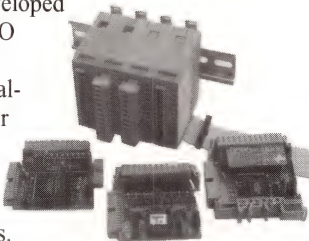
The boards run programs from PROM or a FLASH-based DOS provides the familiar DOS environment. DRAM to 1 Mbyte or CMOS RAM to 512 Kbyte is available.

Both boards have two serial ports (550 compatible on the 541), RTC, EEPROM and Xilinx gate arrays for additional I/O. The 540 has 40 I/O lines, The 541 has hard/floppy disk and LPT interfaces. They are \$350/\$450 each.



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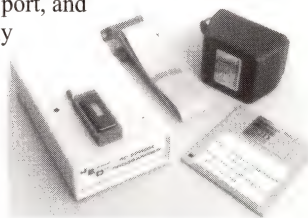
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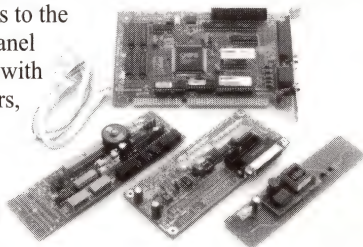
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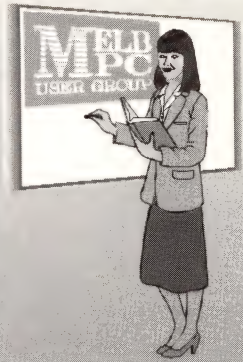


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Applications

Introduction to Word 6.0 macros: \$45

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Prerequisites: Must be able to create, save and edit Word documents, and have experience using Windows.

Office 97 Overview: \$45

Len Krois

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 23 Apr.

Starting Access v2: \$177

Richard Hill

6.30–9.00 pm, Thu 20, 27 Mar, 3, 10 Apr.

This course will show you how to create tables, perform database design, link tables to ensure database integrity, create queries to extract data, create forms and reports to make your database user friendly. This course is for people who have started to use Access or have used another database. If you have not used Access or a database before, then the Introduction to Access course may be of greater benefit.

Prerequisites: Experience with Windows v3.1, some experience with Access or another database.

Starting QuickBooks: \$180

Viv Martin

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 7, 14, 21, 28 Apr.

This course is for people who have started to use QuickBooks and want to gain further benefits from the package.

Prerequisites: You must understand the concepts of double entry booking. You must be familiar with Windows.

Using Excel to Analyse Data: \$75

Ray Azzopardi

6.30 pm–9.00 pm, Thu 17, 24 Apr.

This course will cover functions, formulas, pivot tables, charts, trend analysis, data sorting, subtotaling, data group-ing, filtering, exporting to a database, macro recording, non-workbook files.

Prerequisites: Must have used Excel.

Word for Windows v6/7 graphics: \$45

Noeline Finlay

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 18 Mar.

1.00 pm–4.00 pm, Sun 6 Apr.

A picture says a thousand words. Learn how to use graphics to enhance your documents, letters, faxes etc.

Prerequisites: Must be able to create, save and edit Word documents, and have experience using Windows.

Word for Windows v6/7 long documents: \$45

Noeline Finlay

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 11 Mar.

1.00 pm–4.00 pm, Sun 20 Apr.

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Word for Windows v6/7 tables: \$45

Noeline Finlay

9.00 am–12 noon, Sun 20 Apr.

Tables have hundreds of uses. Keep track of addresses, phone numbers, assets etc. Present data clearly, concisely and in a pleasing format. Learn how to incorporate graphics in tables.

Prerequisites: Must be able to create, save and edit Word documents, and have experience using Windows.

Word for Windows v6/7 templates, styles and page layouts: \$45

Noeline Finlay

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 4 Mar.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sun 6 Apr.

Save time and look professional. Learn how to create consistent and professional looking memos, letters, etc, using templates.

Prerequisites: Must be able to create, save and edit Word documents, and have experience using Windows.

Communications

Communications workshop: \$60

Doug Brooke

10.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 16 Mar.

Data communications depends heavily on modems. This course is discussion of principles and fundamentals of modern communications that will allow you to more effectively use a modem to communicate on the BBS and like services, including the Internet. You will be shown hardware requirements, software requirements, diagnostics and typical setups so that you can more confidently use your modem, PC and telephone line. An introduction to networks, file transfers and other matters will also be covered.

Prerequisites: A good working knowledge of command line computing is assumed.

Using Blue Wave: \$45

Peter Freeman

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 26 Mar.

Basic setup, hints, tips and configuring Blue Wave communication offline reader.

Prerequisites: Must have done either Comms Workshop or Starting Comms.

Using the Melb PC BBS: \$45

Lynn Pollock

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 19 Mar.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 16 Apr.

A basic look at the Melb PC BBS with hints and tips on using all the various menu items. Also covers initial log ons and using the message areas.

Prerequisites: Must have logged onto the Melb PC BBS

Notes

To book or enquire about courses, telephone the office on (03) 9699 6222, 9 am–5 pm, weekdays.

Courses are held at the group's premises, usually in the training room. Some courses are held in the SIG room, so check when you arrive.

For more details see the BBS or the group's Web pages.

Enrolments usually close a week before the course starting date.

The address is:

2nd Floor, 66 Albert Road
South Melbourne VIC 3205.

There is normally plenty of nearby parking in the evenings or at weekends.

Internet

Note: Internet courses are best done in the sequence shown—1 to 5; or 1, 2 or 3, 4 and 5.

1. What is the Internet?: \$45

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 22 Feb.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 26 Apr.

An overview of the Melb PC Internet service. Live demonstrations of all the major programs that go to making up the Internet. Discussion of the Hardware items involved. General questions concerning Internet connections.

Prerequisites: None.

2. Using the Melb PC Internet service—Windows 3.1: \$90

Lynn Pollock

1.00 pm–4 pm, Sat/Sun 1/2 Mar.

1.00 pm–4 pm, Sat/Sun 12/13 Apr.

This is a basic course exclusively for Windows 3.1/3.11 users. Hands-on individual installation of Windows 3.x Internet software. Explanation, discussion and live connections to demonstrate all the major components. Covers all aspects of Internet connection. Basic discussion on broad range of Internet topics including netiquette, viruses and common connection problems. Suit people about to install basic Windows 3.x Internet software or novice users of the Internet.

Prerequisites: Must have a good working knowledge of Windows 3.1.

3. Using the Melb PC Internet service—Windows 95: \$90

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat/Sun 1/2 Mar.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat/Sun

12/13 Apr.

This is a basic course exclusively for Win 95 users. Hands-on individual installation of Win 95 32-bit Internet software. Explanation, discussion and live connections to demonstrate all the major components. Covers all aspects of Internet connection. Basic discussion on broad range of Internet topics including netiquette, viruses and common connection problems. Suit people about to install Win 95 Internet software or novice users of the Internet who want to use the inbuilt Win 95 32-bit TCP/IP software.

Prerequisites: Must have a good working knowledge of Win 95.

4. Effectively using Web Browsers: \$60

Lynn Pollock

1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 22 Mar.

1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 26 Apr.

Complete demonstration and explanation of all features and configurations in the latest versions of Netscape and MS Internet Explorer. Configuring new helper applications, managing bookmarks or favourites, and tips and tricks to maximise your browser usage. Discussion on various searching techniques for locating information on the Web and other browser-related issues.

Prerequisites: Must have attended basic Internet course or have a reasonable Internet understanding. This is an intermediate course.

5. More using Melb PC Internet service: \$90

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 23 Mar.

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 27 Apr.

Complete demonstration and explanation of e-mail (advanced packages) FTP, Archie, Gopher, Finger, Telnet, IRC Network, newsgroups and offline readers, list servers, session timers and more. In addition, connection problems will be discussed as well as general tips and tricks to improve your connection time. A set of detailed instructions will be discussed and practised detailing how to upgrade or add to your Internet software without causing major problems or heartaches.

Prerequisites: Must have attended basic Internet course or have a reasonable Internet understanding. This is an intermediate course.

Operating Systems, Diagnostics, Hardware

Advanced Windows 95: \$45

Lynn Pollock

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 13 Mar.

1.00 pm–4.00 pm, Sat 19 Apr.

Complete hands-on examination of the advanced features found in the Win 95 operating system. Includes adding and configuring new hardware, multiple user configurations, Registry control and editing, advanced system maintenance, backing up essential files, communications and more!

Prerequisites: Attendees must have a good working knowledge of Win 95 and have obtained an understanding of the operating system's functions.

Archiving files: \$45

Peter Freeman

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 9 Apr.

The similarities between all the archivers, command line archiving and unarchiving, compressing files for backups, and more.

Prerequisites: A knowledge of the DOS directory structure is assumed

Computer basics: \$120

Mary Levens

6.30 pm–8.30 pm, Tue 8, 15, 22, 29 Apr.

Take control of your computer with this hands-on guided discovery of DOS-based computing. Covers terminology, basic DOS commands, directory structure, file types, brief discussion of hardware and software. Knowledge of these topics is prerequisite for other courses.

Prerequisites: No prior computing experience required. Students must have frequent access to a DOS-based PC outside of class.

Housekeeping a computer: \$45

Tom Coleman

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 17 Mar.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 1 Apr.

Looking after your PC to get the best performance out of what you have. Avoiding bad habits, bad practices.

Prerequisites: Understanding of simple computer terminology. Experience with basic DOS and the computing environment.

How to buy a computer:

Members: \$10. Non-members \$60 (includes first year's subscription.)

10.30 am–1.30 pm, Sun 23 Mar.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 20 Apr.

What a computer does, what the jargon means, buying advice, tips, no sales talk!

Prerequisites: None.

Introduction to Networks: \$90

Len Krois

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 11, 18 Apr.

This will show you how to connect two or more computers so that you can share computer resources.

Prerequisites: You must be familiar with Windows 3.x or Win 95.

Specialist trainers required

We require additional specialist Trainers in the following subjects for classes commencing later this year.

- Advanced Word for Windows 3.1 & 95.
- MS Publisher.
- Visual Basic.

If you are interested and suitably experienced in one of these areas, please contact in the first instance lynn@melbpc.org.au or mail details to Lynn Pollock c/- the Office with your details.

Introduction to UNIX: \$45

Len Krois

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 24 Mar.

UNIX/UNIX basics for people that want a basic feel for the open systems environment. LINUX is a popular shareware version of UNIX that will run on IBM compatible PCs. The session includes: logging onto a UNIX system, finding your way around, manipulating files, viewing and editing text files, using the on-line text manual.

Prerequisites: Command line computing knowledge preferred

Overview of Windows 95: \$45

Barry Fredrickson

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 21 Mar.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 19 Apr.

Take control of your computer with this hands-on guided discovery of Win 95-based computing. Covers terminology, directory structure, file types. Knowledge of these topics is prerequisite for other courses.

Prerequisites: No prior computing experience required.

Starting Windows 95: \$137.50

Len Krois

9.00 am–5.30 pm, Sat 5 Apr.

Introduces the Win 95 environment to the computer novice. You'll learn basic Windows jargon and terminology; how to accomplish everyday tasks and all of the skills you'll need to work in Win 95. Students will receive a comprehensive exercise manual.

Prerequisites: None. However, you will have an advantage if you have had some exposure to computers and have used a mouse.

Upgrade to Windows 95: \$137.50

Len Krois

9.00 am–5.30 pm, Sat 15 Mar.

This course is for Windows v3.1/v3.11 users moving to Win 95. A thorough overview of all of the new features you are getting with Win 95 so you can quickly convert your Windows 3.1 skills to the new Win 95 arena.

Prerequisites: You should be familiar with Windows v3.1 to the level of the Starting Windows v3.1 course.

Virus protection: \$45

Tom Coleman

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 14 Mar.

Virus avoidance, detection and removal, viruses explained, recognising viruses, safe housekeeping practices.

Prerequisites: Computing Basics course or an equivalent knowledge of computing.

Weekday daytime courses

These new courses use Pentium PCs in excellent training conditions, including a very effective air conditioner, even in Melbourne heatwaves.

Applications

Quicken for small business

Members: \$200. Non-members: \$250.

Lunch included.

Viv Martin

9.30 am–4.30 pm, Tue 18 Mar, 25 Mar.

Bookkeeping, record keeping, producing reports for accountants.

Prerequisites: Basic Windows experience assumed.

Starting Word for Windows

Members: \$200. Non-members: \$250. Lunch included.

John Fitzsimons

9.30 am–4.30 pm, Wed/Thu 2/3 Apr.

Introduction to word processing using Microsoft Word. How to cut, copy, paste, format text.

Layout of pages, mail merges.

Prerequisites: None, however, you will have an advantage if you have had some exposure to computers and have used a mouse.

Internet

Using the Melb PC Internet—

Windows 95

Members: \$100. Non-members: \$125. Lunch included.

Lynn Pollock

9.30 am–4.30 pm, Fri 21 Mar

This is a basic course exclusively for Win 95 users. Hands-on individual installation of Win 95 32-bit Internet software. Explanation, discussion and live connections to demonstrate all the major components. Covers all aspects of Internet connection. Basic discussion on broad range of Internet topics including netiquette, viruses and common connection problems. Suit people about to install Win 95 Internet software or novice users of the Internet who want to use the inbuilt Win 95 32-bit TCP/IP software.

Prerequisites: Must have a good working knowledge of Win 95.

Operating Systems, Diagnostics, Hardware

Windows 95

Members: \$100. Non-members: \$125. Lunch included.

Lynn Pollock

9.30 am–4.30 pm, Thu 20 Mar.

Introduces the Win 95 environment to the computer novice. You'll learn basic Windows jargon and terminology, how to accomplish everyday tasks and all of the skills you'll need to work in Win 95.

Prerequisites: No prerequisites. However, you will have an advantage if you have had some exposure to computers and have used a mouse.

Training order form

Course Title	Starting Date	Amount

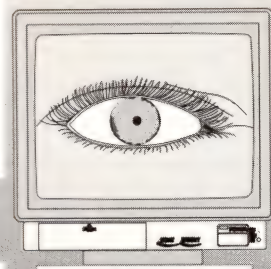
If you wish to book a course by mail, please use one of the payment forms elsewhere in this issue (such as on page 31). Remember to include your name and address.

Total:

Vision and Visual Display Units

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Julius Liubinas



Will using a computer (VDU) harm my eyes? The answer to this frequently asked question is not a simple "yes" or "no." Factors that need to be taken into account include many of the commonly encountered eye-focus problems, the normal (and abnormal) eye motor control mechanisms as well as the ageing processes. Other more exotic concepts such as "dark focus" may help to explain many of the symptoms reported by VDU users as well as some of the changes that occur within the visual system. The visual demands of the VDU user are also unique and contribute to the difficulties encountered.

Some background information

The best place to start is with a simple lesson on the function of the eye. The eye is essentially the camera of the body taking pictures that are then processed by the brain (our organic motherboard with built-in sound card and virtual reality chips).

To function efficiently the body needs to see clearly (blurred pictures are hard to interpret) in single vision (anyone who has experienced double vision will testify how disorienting it is) with comfort (any undue effort will distract from the task at hand) for an extended period of time (most people still work close to an 8-hour day).

Almost everybody has heard of short sightedness, long sightedness and astigmatism. The more mature amongst our audience will have heard of or experienced presbyopia.

Short sightedness

Imagine a camera that is focussed to take a picture up close. To take a picture in the distance the lens needs to be adjusted to allow for the longer distance. Unfortunately in short sightedness the focus can only be let out so far before it stops leaving clear focus close-up with everything blurred in the distance. The greater the short sightedness, the closer the clear vision limit lies and the more blurred the distance vision. Someone who is short sighted can, therefore, see clearly up close but distance vision is blurred.

Normal vision

The same camera continues to adjust its focus until distant objects become clear. A normal person can see far and close but needs to adjust focus according to the distance of viewing.

Long sightedness

The same camera is now focussed for distance but can continue to change focus now leaving both distance and near (more so) blurred. The long-sighted person can see far and close but must apply focus effort even for distance vision, and even more for close work. Fatigue is the most common result following the extra effort involved.

Astigmatism

This is an optical anomaly that is perhaps best considered to be a distortion of the front surface of the eye. Instead of being spherical it has been distorted and is now more like an Australian Rules football rather than a soccer ball. Vision is blurred at all distances. Astigmatism is almost always present in conjunction with either long sightedness or short sightedness.

Presbyopia

Ageing is an unfortunate consequence of staying alive. With time the eye slowly loses control of the focusing system until around age 45, when most people get their first pair of reading glasses. Long-sighted people need them earlier, short-sighted people later. The normal-sighted eye is now a fixed focus system that can take pictures at a distance.

Eye motor control

Most people have two eyes. Best vision is achieved when they are aligned correctly so that both eyes are looking directly at the same object. Sounds easy and is for most people. However some of us are not as lucky.

A crossed eye is one that is constantly turned in. It is usually associated with a lazy or weak eye. Eyes can also turn outwards. While it is cosmetically poor the eyes still function very well; in fact, better than the next eye motor problem, which is a partly compensated turn.

**the VDU tends
to highlight
pre-existing
eye disorders**

In some people one of the eyes wants to turn in or out but the person is able to keep it under control. The price paid for the better appearance is fatigue and reduced efficiency.

Another common control problem is rapid fatigue of the focusing system. These people simply find it difficult to hold clear focus in an otherwise healthy system.

Vision and the VDU

So now it is time to revisit the initial question, "Does VDU use harm my eyes?"

VDU work is different from normal clerical work. It requires prolonged concentration on a target about 50–70 cm away. The viewing distance is fixed, unlike clerical work. The screen is typically raised. This goes against the normal physiological tendency for the eyes to turn in when looking down. Text viewed on the screen is seldom as sharp as hard copy text making it more difficult to hold clear focus.

The most common complaints include headaches, blurred vision in the distance after working on VDUs, difficulty adjusting focus from near to far, blurred near vision, itching or burning eyes, eye fatigue, double vision, losing place or difficulty focussing when looking from hard copy to the screen. The symptoms are often vague but seldom present when the VDU has not been used.

The VDU itself is not responsible for the discomfort. It simply tends to highlight pre-existing eye focussing and visual motor control disorders as the task demands better eye motor control.

Treatment of symptoms falls into several categories: ergonomics, spectacles and vision training.

Ergonomics

Care in designing the workplace plays an important part in ensuring user comfort. In particular, the chair should be adjustable so that it can be adjusted for height and back support. The centre of the VDU screen should be at least 20 degrees below horizontal. The user's line of sight should be perpendicular to the plane of the screen.

Associated reading material or copy should be as close as possible to the VDU, minimising eye movements as the user changes from VDU to hard copy and back. Excessively large angles of change require head movements that are much slower and far less accurate.

Lighting requirements can vary between individuals but some rules of thumb include:

- The brightness of the screen should always be greater than the surrounding background.
- High contrast (black on white) targets are easier to see than low contrast (grey on grey).
- Reflected glare on VDU screens should be minimised through appropriate placement of VDUs within an office.
- Windows and bright light sources should not be behind the operator. Special glare anti-reflection screens are available on the market to assist. Likewise windows and bright lights should not be behind the VDU screen.

Curtains or blinds can help reduce the problems caused by glare from windows. Small hoods made from cardboard can be placed over a screen to help reduce the impact of excessive overhead lighting. Local lighting on hard copy may be better than bright room lighting.

Frequent rests are important, as is looking away from the VDU to a distant object every few minutes. If you find that you have trouble changing focus from close to far after spending time on a VDU you are in trouble and should seek professional advice.

Spectacles

The type of spectacles provided depends to a certain degree on the type of prescription, its severity and the person's age.

Short sighted: These people can see close but not far. If the degree of short sightedness is only slight then quite often it is easier to work on a VDU without glasses rather than with. As the strength of the prescription increases the limit of clear focus becomes less than the viewing distance for the screen. Distance spectacles may now be provided to restore normal vision.

Long sighted: Remember that these people have more trouble at close than far. Low powers may not need correction. It will depend on the age of the person and how well he/she copes with the extra stress induced by the long sightedness.

As the power increases spectacles are more commonly required as the load on the focussing system becomes excessive. **Astigmatism:** The prescription of spectacles will depend on the degree of blur experienced by the person. Again the higher the level of astigmatism, the greater the need.

Presbyopia: Those of us old enough to have encountered this age-related reading problem may have already experienced some of the frustration in having spectacles prescribed. It's a bit like being between a rock and a hard place. Let me explain for our youthful members.

As the focussing system of the eye deteriorates it becomes increasingly difficult to see clearly when reading. Many take to holding objects further away (thus staying within the shrinking near range) or standing near bright lights to read (bright lights cause the pupil of the eye to shrink to a pin hole thus improving the optics of the eye). The glasses used to correct for this sign of maturity effectively make the wearer short sighted, namely near vision is good but long vision is poor.

When the prescription is low, the range of near focus is good, like the person who is only a little short sighted. As the glasses become stronger, long vision becomes worse and the near range can come too close to see a VDU screen with ease (remember they pushed it further away last year and set up the work place accordingly!).

Even more complicated is the plight of those who need to see in the distance while still being able to read close. They have bifocals or multifocals prescribed. These lenses essentially have different optic zones built in. The top of the lens is for long sight. The bottom is for reading. The bottom is set low in the frame so that it does not interfere with distance vision.

But VDU screens are typically just below eye level so that the glasses give no relief on the screen unless the head is tilted back excessively causing neck problems. If the reading zone is set higher, the VDU is now clear but daily living chores such as walking or driving are hindered by the blurry distance vision!

Enter the second pair of spectacles! The best solution is to have two pairs of glasses; the first for general wear, the second for VDU use. The VDU spectacles should be set so that the top portion incorporates some of, but not all of, the reading prescription. Distance will be a little blurred but if the VDU screen is set back a little the compromise is quite acceptable. The bottom of the lens has the full reading correction so that fine print can be read with ease.

SOLA Australia recently introduced a wonderful lens designed just for this purpose. The power change from top to bottom has been limited to two levels

but in return the optics are such that there is a *wide* field of reading and middle clear vision. Simply stunning for VDU operators. The trade name is the "Access" lens. Some companies acknowledge the VDU specificity of this sort of lens and subsidise staff accordingly.

Eye motor control

Poor eye motor control will typically cause fatigue, variable blur or difficulty changing focus from close to far. Depending on the exact nature of the problem either glasses or eye exercises or both may be prescribed.

The more astute reader may have noticed that I have still have not answered the initial question. The reason for my tardiness lies in the controversial nature of the answer. There are some who would say "Yes" and some who would say "No." There are some interesting arguments occurring within the eye care professions as the issue is being resolved. When there is a definitive answer I will write again to let you know.

So until then the next time those eyes are red, sore, blurred, strained or tired just remember it may not be the result of a good night the night before and seek professional advice. □



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Cnr South Rd & Nepean Hwy

Sunday 23rd March
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What does membership of Melb PC offer you?

BENEFITS OF BELONGING



Strength

Melbourne PC User Group Inc. has over 11,500 members and is the largest PC User Group in the world. It was founded in 1983, and is still run for its members, people like **you**.

The Group employs a Chief Executive Officer, two full-time office staff and some part-time help. Some other services are provided by contractors, but most other functions of the club—magazine writing and editing, maintenance of online services; collection and distribution of shareware; organisation of SIG and monthly meetings and much more, is performed by volunteers.

The Group today proudly has a membership of people from all walks of life and with a broad range of computer skills. With this vast store of knowledge, members have access to information and help in numerous fields—programming, software solutions, communications, DOS and Windows, to name just a few.

Training

One of the Group's most important and popular services is the provision of training in a diverse range of computer skills, from starting with computers to advanced programming.

Melb PC has its own fully-equipped training centre, using networked Pentium systems. Courses are run as a service to members and thus are budgeted on a break-even basis, making them very cost-competitive when compared to similar courses elsewhere.

Students are taught in a classroom environment with an instructor and one computer per student. Courses include applications (such as Quicken, Excel and Word), BBS and Internet usage, and operating systems such as DOS and Windows.

Most classes are run in the evenings or at weekends, when parking is readily available. The Club's rooms are also easily accessible by public transport.

All courses provide suitable training material and support.

A list of courses on offer to members appears in each issue of *PC Update*.

Magazine

PC Update, the magazine of the Melbourne PC User Group, is sent to you 11 times a year as part of your membership privileges. *PC Update* publishes articles written by members and all members are welcome, indeed encouraged, to write articles on a subject they know about, to share with others. *PC Update* reprints occasional articles from overseas user groups, to keep Melb PC members as up-to-date as possible.

PC Update has won awards in each of the last six years in the International User Groups' Newsletter Contest. Some of the dozen awards it has won are "Best Feature Articles," "Best Publication," "Best Features and Reviews," and "Best Columnist." It has also been runner-up in "Best Publication" and "Best Layout and Design." Many people join the Group just for the value *PC Update* provides, well worth the annual membership fee on its own, and then discover all the other benefits of membership.

A year's membership of Melb PC, which includes having *PC Update* mailed to you, costs about as much as it does to buy a year's issues over the counter.

Monthly meeting

Each month, except January, Melb PC holds a meeting, open to members and visitors. The meeting is usually addressed by two representatives from the computer industry on topics of general interest. They frequently give away samples of software and other products. These speakers include many from Australian vendors and distributors—we have also been privileged to be addressed by CEOs such as Bill Gates, Philippe Kahn, Gordon Eubanks and others who made special visits to address our members.

There is also the ability to address questions to the membership at large, seeking advice or problem-solving. Shareware and diskettes are for sale and members take the opportunity to socialise and discuss anything that takes their fancy—even computers!

Following the meeting many members gather for further discourse over a meal, arranged at a convenient restaurant, at "user-friendly" prices.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Group has a number of SIGs covering many aspects of computer use. A SIG can deal with any topic relating to personal computing, ranging from particular applications to hardware and programming, or how to get the best from your equipment.

There are also regional SIGs, for members in outlying geographical areas.

A list of meeting dates, places and contacts for SIGs is published each month in this magazine, together with reports of previous and forthcoming activities. Attendance at any or all SIG meetings is available to any member.

Bulletin board

Melb PC operates a 23-hours-a-day bulletin board system (BBS) as another member service. The BBS, running on 34 lines, is the biggest OS/2-based BBS in the world.

The BBS has two main functions—electronic mail and message exchange, and file transfer facilities. The mail and messaging facilities enable members to exchange messages with each other and to seek help on a wide range of topics, not only from other members but also from the world-wide PC community. This service gives BBS users access to an enormous pool of experience and talent on a vast array of subjects. If you have a problem, put a message on the BBS and, more often than not, it's answered in a day or so!

The BBS carries many files on a range of topics. These have been uploaded by members who found them useful and can be downloaded by other members. They include many useful utilities and the latest versions of shareware software, often obtained from overseas BBSs before appearing in other Australian outlets.

Internet service

The club provides access to a 127-line full-featured Internet service, providing access to Usenet, ftp, irc, www, gopher and telnet.

SLIP/PPP accounts are provided. This service is very popular and is being expanded and enhanced to serve a larger number of members.

Special UPS Deal

WATCH THIS SPACE

This page was reserved for the announcement of a special deal on UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) Systems for Melb PC members.

On the morning we delivered the magazine to our printers, we were still waiting for the information—promised to be available five days earlier.

At that late stage it was not possible to find a suitable one-page article to fill this space.

Keep watching—maybe we'll get it next month!

UPS Deal

Model(s):	Unknown	Price:	Unknown
Capacity:	Unknown	Delivery Cost:	Unknown
Size:	Unknown	Availability:	Unknown
Features:	Unknown	Closing Date:	Unknown

Hopefully, more information next month...

Linux at home

OPERATING SYSTEMS

Peter Kostouros



Linux is a free (see panel) independent implementation of UNIX for Intel's i386 processor. Initially written by Linus Torvalds as a student project in the early 1990s, Linux has developed, through international collaborative effort, into an operating system that has industrial, academic, and government application.

Linux has many features expected from a modern operating system: multitasking, multiuser, networking, advanced memory management, virtual memory, dynamic libraries, POSIX compliance, and support for many hardware devices. I first heard of Linux several years ago, and what appealed to me was that it could coexist with MS-Windows. This article describes how I installed Linux and its accompanying software, and how I use it at home for most of my computing.

Linux distributions

Linux requires many utilities (such as files, libraries, and programs) to run. Several people and companies have organized these utilities and complementary Linux software into distributions that make for easy installation. Some popular Linux distributions include Slackware, RedHat, and Debian, and are available at many Internet sites or on CD-ROMs. Infomagic's Linux Developer's Resource is a six disc set with several Linux distributions and a collection of Linux, UNIX, and X software. I will be referring to the April 1996 Linux Developer's Resource and the Slackware 3.0 distribution in this article.

From the GNU General Public License, which covers Linux

"When we speak of free software, we are referring to freedom, not price. Our General Public Licenses are designed to make sure that you have the freedom to distribute copies of free software (and charge for this service if you wish), that you receive source code or can get it if you want it, that you can change the software or use pieces of it in new free programs; and that you know you can do these things."

Installation

Before Linux, my UNIX experience was limited to running UNIX applications and basic UNIX file management. I thought UNIX installation and system and network administration was for experts. My attitude changed when I was prepared to go where there be dragons.

The hardware and installation notes describe Linux requirements and loading options: a typical IBM PC i386 clone with 4 MB RAM and 40–80 MB of free hard disk space is sufficient, and can be loaded to an MS-DOS directory, for example, CALINUX, another partition, another drive, or run from the CD-ROM (with minimal installation on the hard disk). I chose to install Linux onto my second drive.

A pair of Linux installation disks must be created to boot Linux from and then proceed to install the Slackware distribution. The installation disks, boot kernel and root disk, can be created from MS-Windows by *lininst*, MS-DOS, or another UNIX system. Once I had the installation disks (created with *lininst*), I inserted the boot kernel disk into the floppy drive and safely restarted the computer.

The system began in text mode and after a while it presented a "boot:" prompt. At this stage, entries such as SCSI controller IRQ and address, may be given to force hardware detection, just in case Linux probing misses some gear; there are documents and examples describing many entries accepted by Linux for hardware detection. I hit the return key as I had nothing to enter; Linux began to boot. When the system boots, Linux prompts the user to replace the boot disk with the root disk in the floppy drive, and hit the return key. Once Linux completed its boot/root process, it presented a login prompt; I logged in as "root".

The first thing I did was prepare the hard disk. I created four partitions using (Linux's) *fdisk*: the partitions were to hold the

- System files (32 MB)
- Program files (380 MB)
- User files (55 MB)
- Swap drive (32 MB).

I created these partitions to separate system files from user files. I found out

Linux kernels are released regularly over the Internet

later that if the system files are on a separate partition, it is easier to fix the file system should it break into pieces (crash).

Once the hard disk was ready, I began the main installation with *setup*, which is a text-based, menu-driven program that automates the install process. It

- Performs pre-installation (disk formatting, sets up destination directories, makes MS-DOS directories visible to Linux)
- Loads software
- Configures the system and network. The Slackware distribution comes as disk sets and includes
 - The base system (programs to get a Linux system running)
 - Applications (editors and online manuals)
 - Program development tools, networking software (news and mail readers)
 - TeX (typesetting software)
 - X (graphical user environment)
 - X development tools and applications
 - Games

A complete installation requires about 200 MB. The CD-ROM installation took about an hour and transformed my PC into a UNIX workstation.

A UNIX workstation? Well you might ask. A workstation, from a PC perspective, is a high-end system usually with the tag "Sun" or "Silicon Graphics" attached. Since some people have observed that their Linux/PC systems outperform certain workstations (worth tens of thousands of dollars), I can make some claims.

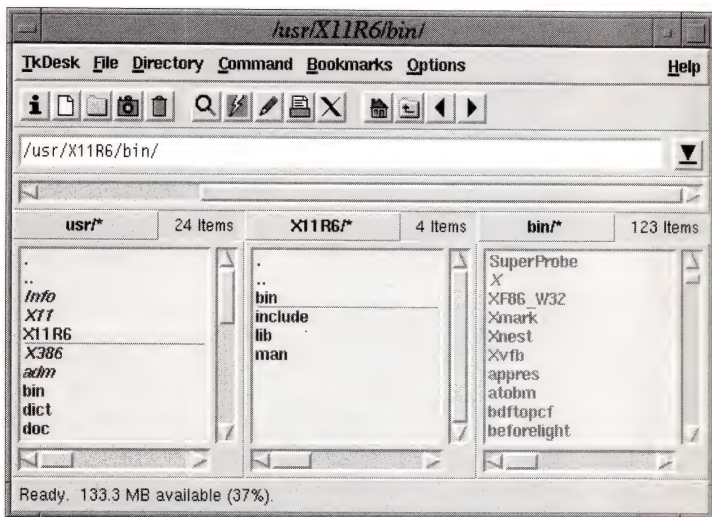


Figure 1. TkDesk, a file manager, running in the fwm window manager.

Running Linux

There are several ways to boot Linux. I installed LILO, a boot loader, and organised it to load either Linux or MS-Windows95; the selection is made at boot time.

The super-user of the system is "root" who has unlimited privileges. On my system, root's responsibilities include system maintenance, (un)installing software, and establishing Internet connections. Although I am the only user of the system, hence the super-user, I set up another account, peter, from which I do ordinary work (that is, no system administration). An ordinary user (peter) does not have unlimited privileges. Although users can be given super-user privileges, in which case they can access normally inaccessible areas, it is not advisable. Warning: this can lead to irreversible damage.

Since Linux is multitasking and multi-user, my system can have many users on it simultaneously (say root and peter) and I (as "peter" and "root") can switch between login sessions using hot-key combinations. For example, if, as "root" (that is me), I am installing software that

is taking a while to load, I can switch to another login session, where "peter" (that is me, again) can log on and read the latest news.

Linux can access MS-DOS partitions so I have access to my MS-DOS data and can copy files to and from my Linux partitions. Linux, in its file hierarchy, sees the MS-DOS partitions as ordinary directories: I can switch to MS-DOS C drive by issuing "cd /dosC" (note the forward slash delimits directories in UNIX). Linux also has an MS-DOS emulator, *dosemu*, that enables some MS-DOS programs to run from Linux.

Although many programs are text based, Linux also runs a graphical environment, X.

The X window system (X)

X is a network transparent window system. Basically, X is a program that sits on top of Linux where it offers a graphical window environment. X has many programs written for it—mostly in the spirit of Linux contributed—such as

- Window managers (*fwm*, *olvwm*)
- File managers (*TkDesk*, *xfm*)

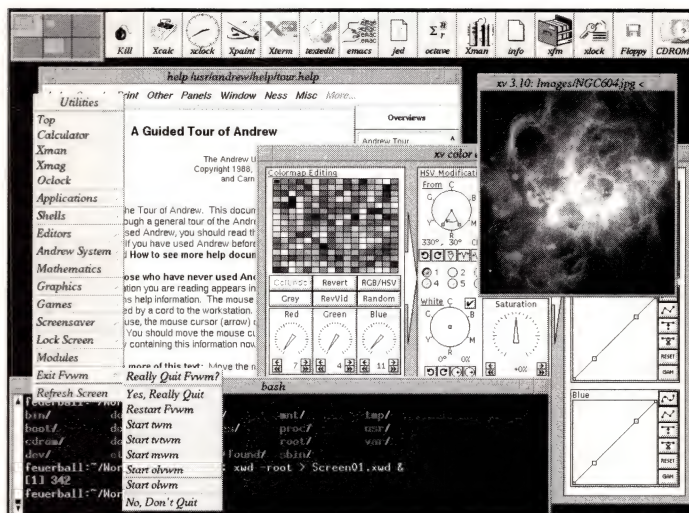


Figure 2. Partial screen shot of an X session. Top left corner window shows the virtual desktops.

- Graphics, rendering and image processing programs (*Xpaint*, *zgv*, *BMRT*, *XV*, *Khoros*)
- Word processors (*ez*, *Xemacs*)
- News and mail readers (*GNUS*, *Xmail*)
- www browsers (*Navigator*)
- Scientific programs (*Octave*).

Many text-based programs can be run from *xterm*, a terminal emulator. The Slackware distribution has a collection of popular X programs; most X applications are on the accompanying CD-ROMs or can be downloaded from the Internet. There are commercial packages for Linux/X too, such as WordPerfect, StarOffice, and Mathematica.

Window managers provide styles for windows (Figure 1) and multiple virtual desktops (Figure 2). A desktop is a work area that can be larger than the physical screen: my desktop size is 1600 x 1200 (my monitor's resolution is 1024 x 768 pixels). I have six virtual desktops so I do not clutter my workspace with overlapping windows and minimised windows. Window managers are also configurable and can give windows and applications a familiar look.

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X applications are referred to as clients and may be running on the same machine as the X server or on another. For example, I ran and interacted with a demonstration GUI program—the *Andrew* User Interface System (*Andrew*), an integrated suite of programs featuring a wordprocessor, a spreadsheet, and drawing programs—from the US that was on an RS/6000 running AIX 3.2.5. No software installation was done at my end.

Although Linux can run with about 2 MB RAM, I found that when running X with 8 MB RAM there was a lot of paging (the swap file was used regularly). When I upgraded to 16 MB RAM (and to an i486), X worked well with some xterms running; programs began to slow (due to paging) when I ran several memory hungry applications, such as a combination of *gcc*, *Geomview*, or *ObjectBuilder*. With 32 MB RAM I run several applications (*xterms*, *Navigator*, and *Andrew*) without the system using virtual memory.

Upgrading

Linux kernels are released regularly over the Internet, sometimes, a few minor revisions a week. The kernel is the heart of an (UNIX) operating system: its responsibilities include handling tasks, the file system, and security. Upgrading a kernel involves getting the version you want (as source code), compiling it (by issuing "make mrproper; make config; make dep; make zImage") and installing it. As my confidence and familiarity with Linux grew, I began to create custom kernels: kernels tuned for my system. The Linux kernels supplied on the installation disks support a lot of hard-ware. Obviously, I did not require all the support (for example, I have no Ethernet), so I trimmed off the fat. The trimming is done during the "make config" stage. Note, newer kernels may require some libraries and programs to be upgraded too.

There are several ways of upgrading the Slackware distribution. I found the simplest was to back up my configuration files and the utilities I wrote, and format the partitions containing the system files and program files, kind of getting a fresh start. The user's directory (/home) remains unaltered as it is on a partition not to be formatted. Once I installed the new distribution, I set up the user accounts, loaded the backup files, and over time, reloaded programs and application suites.

Connecting to the Internet

To connect to the Internet I created a kernel with PPP support and installed a suite of supporting PPP programs. Initially I connected using minicom—a communications program—and manually answering the login and password prompts. When Melb PC (my ISP) offered Password Authentication Protocol logins (PAP), I posted a message to a Melb PC newsgroup requesting PAP information. Sure enough, I was directed to the Linux specific PAP set up notes at the Melb PC web site. Once I created some preliminary files using the Melb PC PAP notes as a guide, and set up access permissions to them (for security), I now just issue "pppd &" to connect.

Availability

I bought the April 1996 LINUX Developer's Resource CD-ROM for \$39.95 from Pacific MicroLabs Computer Centre a few months ago, and have since seen the latest version (December 1996) for \$27.00 (plus postage and handling) from Cetus Technology (www.zip.com.au/~lychan). The Developer's Resource CD-ROM has the Slackware, Debian, and Red Hat distributions, several commercial demonstration applications, and plenty of supplementary Linux/UNIX/X software.

As mentioned earlier, a distribution (or partial distribution) can also be downloaded from various sites, for example, sunsite.anu.edu.au/pub/linux. A complete download is usually prohibitive: 115 MB for Slackware. If you decide on a partial distribution, the distribution's readme or installation files indicate which files are required.

Conclusion

Linux is an operating system that turns the PC into a UNIX workstation, and with X, gives a familiar graphical window environment. Installing and setting up Linux for the home is easy, even for a novice. There may be some difficulties setting up a network, configuring X, or setting up mail or news readers, however, most problems can be overcome by reading the *howto* documents or posting to the relevant news groups. And, as you may recall, Linux is free.

About the author

When not computing, Peter enjoys test cricket, foreign films, and reading the classics.

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HP 820/850/870 - Tricolour	51641A	2 of ea. Col.	\$45
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HP 1200/650 (C,M,Y,B)	51640/50	3	\$45
HP Paintjet - Tricolour	51606C	4 of ea. Col.	\$45
HP Think/Quiet Jet/Diconix - Blk.	51604A	12	\$35
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* Canon BJ10/Starwriter - Black	BC01	5	\$35
* Canon BJ200/230/BJC210 - Black	BC02	5	\$35
* Canon BJC210 - Tricolour	BC05	4 of ea. Col.	\$45
* Canon BJC600/610/620 - Black	BJI201	6	\$35
* Canon BJC600/610/620 - Tricolour	BJI201	2.5 of ea. Col.	\$45
* Canon BJC300/330 - Black	BJI642	3	\$35
* Canon BJC4000/4100/4200/4550-Blk.	BCI20/BCI21BK	4/30	\$45
* Canon BJC4000/4100 - Tricolour	BCI210C	10 of ea. Col.	\$45
* Canon BJ30/BJC70 - Black	BCI10BK	12	\$35
* Canon BJC70 - Black	BCI11BK	30	\$35
* Canon BJC70 - Tricolour	BCI11C	20 of ea. Col.	\$45
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Comms on the Internet



WANDERING THE WORLD WIDE WEB

The Internet Ferret

There are occasions when looking for something on the Internet can be a "Catch 22," when you're looking for comms information, the Internet can be a good place to start searching. Here are a few informative or interesting comms-related sites to get you started.

Hayes

<http://www.hayes.com>

If you don't already know it, Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. is the firm that set the standard by which all modems communicate. Right now, the big news at the Hayes web site is that Hayes is announcing support for K56flex to meet its customers' needs for high-resolution multimedia applications—like video conferencing. K56flex is a powerful modem protocol for achieving 56 kbps transmissions—over standard telephone lines. For more information about Hayes 56K technology, visit their 56K page.

The Hayes Links page includes people you should know in the industry and interesting and useful sites for all web surfers. These include:

- Association of Online Professionals (AOP)
- Electronic Frontiers Foundation (EFF)
- Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG)
- Quarterdeck
- The most popular search engines

Telecom Information Resources on the Internet

<http://www.spp.umich.edu/telecom/telecom-info.html>

A bit of ferreting around suggests this is the site previously called "Guide to Telecommunications Resources." It now features more than 2000 links and continues to be expanded and updated. Check out "Current Internet Headlines" (from Mecklermedia) for the latest news on the net.

This site includes links to information sources relating to the technical, economic, public policy, and social aspects of telecommunications. All forms of telecommunication, including voice, data, video, wired, wireless, cable TV, and satellite, are included.

Netcomm

<http://www.netcomm.com.au>

One of Australia's best known modem manufacturers runs a site which is unashamedly commercial. If you want to register a product online, join the NetComm mailing list, read press releases about the company, or their take on "Making Electronic Commerce Safe," this is the spot for you.

Navas 28800 Modem FAQ

<http://www.aimnet.com/~jnavas/>

Next time you have a query relating to the Internet, comms or modems, log on to this site (before calling a Melb PC Dial Help volunteer). You'll probably find a satisfactory answer amongst the hundreds readily available at this information packed repository.

A sampling of what I found:

- Fix for slow transfers with Windows 95 Dial-Up Networking
- Why do my online connections pause?
- Microsoft releases Dialup Networking Update
- Microsoft fixes Winsock memory leak in Windows 95 kernel
- What causes abrupt disconnects when I am online?

Smallest Web Server

<http://smallest.pharlap.com>

During the past 30 years we have seen a rapid acceleration in miniaturisation in many fields. When I heard about this site from my young friend (and fellow Melb PC member), Doug Brooke, it sounded mind boggling—and it is. Check it out and see the amazing range of information you can glean from this tiny gem.

It is claimed to be the smallest Web site in the world—as it exists solely on a tiny circuit board. Phar Lap created it to show some of the many possibilities for putting embedded systems on the World Wide Web. This web server is running on a 486SLC-based Single Board Computer (PC/104) which is only 9.5 x 9 cm (3.8 x 3.6 inches) in size. The server software is running on Phar Lap's Realtime ETS Kernel. The web server provides realtime weather data from Cambridge, Massachusetts in the USA. The demonstration shows how the web can be used to access and

Editor's note

When I saw this company's name I had to know how a company in Cambridge, Massachusetts came to be called Phar Lap and I figured our readers would want to know too. Here it is.

Hi Carol,

*When the three founders of the company were looking for a name, they wanted one that indicated **fast**, **first** and the **best**. One of the founders had recently seen a motion picture about one of the world's fastest race horses from Australia, who could not lose—Phar Lap.*

Let me know if you have any further questions.

Best Regards,

Susan Romanowsky

control small, low-cost embedded systems.

Log on and you can choose from

- Current weather readings for Cambridge, Massachusetts
- High/Low/Average weather readings for today
- Table of weather readings for today
- Technical details of the "World's Smallest Web Server"
- MicroWeb Server plugins
- Online debugger
- ActiveX Gallery
- Java Gallery
- Links to other weather pages

The firm built this demonstration site as a solution to the needs of commerce and industry (police, firefighters, traffic control etc.) who would like access to data without the cost of exclusive links.

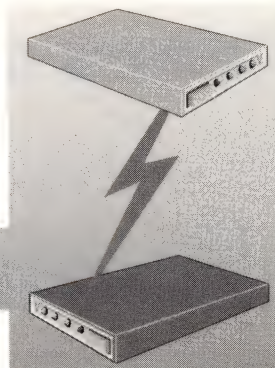
About the author

The Internet Ferret is the pseudonym of one of Melb PC's long-time members. He has no affiliation with any of the companies mentioned. □

Navigating a BBS

COMMUNICATIONS TUTORIAL

Jean D'Andrea



This article is about connecting to the Melb PC BBS. I have not tried to cover every detail, as many settings are defaults, however, the examples I have used correspond to our BBS. Other BBSS may have different procedures. They will, however, be similar to those described below.

Before you dial in

You've just bought your first modem. Naturally you're impatient to fire it up and get online. Hold it right there. You're much more likely to be successful if you read the manual first.

Now that you've done that. You're ready to configure your modem, and communications (comms) program to suit your particular system. My comms program is Telix for DOS, and I have a 28,800 modem. Many of the settings will be the same, or similar in the software you use. Some of the more important settings you'll need to use are shown in Figure 1.

If your program has an "auto baud detect" option, ensure that it is not active.

For a 28,800 modem, I use 57,600 bps. If you have a 14,400 modem, use 19,200, or perhaps 38,400. Although this may be too fast. Many newer computers have high-speed UARTs and can handle the faster speed, older PCs may require you to lower the bps. You'll have to experiment.

Select the comms port to which your modem is connected, the default is usually port 2.

Most BBSS use 8 bits for data, 0 for parity, and 1 stop bit: these are the default settings in many comms programs.

The best video mode to use is ANSI or ANSI-BBS. The preferred transfer protocol for Melb PC's BBS is Zmodem. But others may use different protocols.

Set up a "Phone Book" in your comms program. Enter the numbers of your favourite BBS, Melb PC being your first choice, of course!

When you've completed the setup, you're almost ready to dial. A couple more points, then you can get online! Disable call waiting, if you have it. You can do this yourself, or configure your comms program to dial the relevant number sequence. Disconnect any other phones on the same line, if you can. Some phones cause modem disconnects when the phone goes through an automatic recharge process.

Going online

Now you're ready to go on line! Select the BBS number (from your phone book), and press Enter. After the modem dials and the call is answered, you should hear some strange screeching and wailing noises. Those are the two modems (yours and the one at the BBS) negotiating a

**configure your
modem and
go online to
explore files
and messages**

connection. When the logon screen appears, you'll see a prompt, asking you to enter your name. Once you do that, you'll most likely be told that you're not on the list. Don't worry, this is normal. It means that you haven't logged on to our BBS before. Naturally, there will be exceptions to this. For example, if your name is John Brown, there may already be someone of that name registered as a user. If you've never been on before, and you're asked for your password, then you can be sure this is the case. If

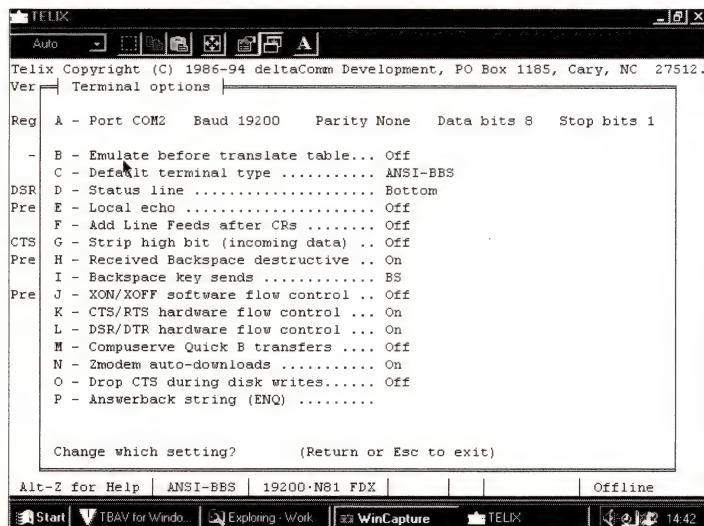


Figure 1. Setting up Telix.

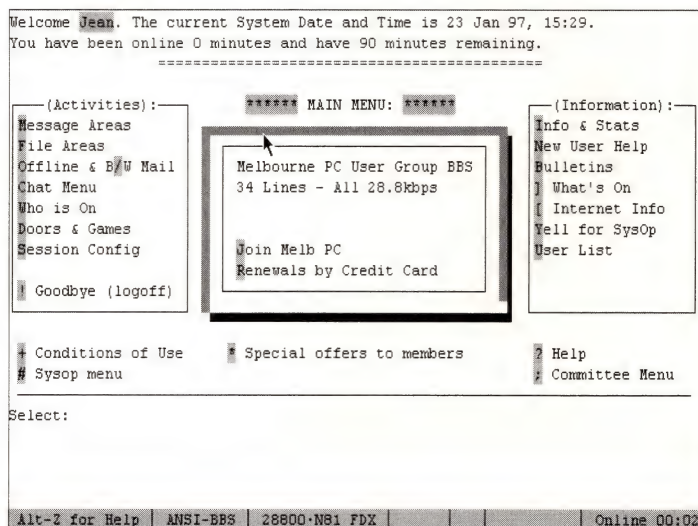


Figure 2. Melb PC BBS Main Menu.

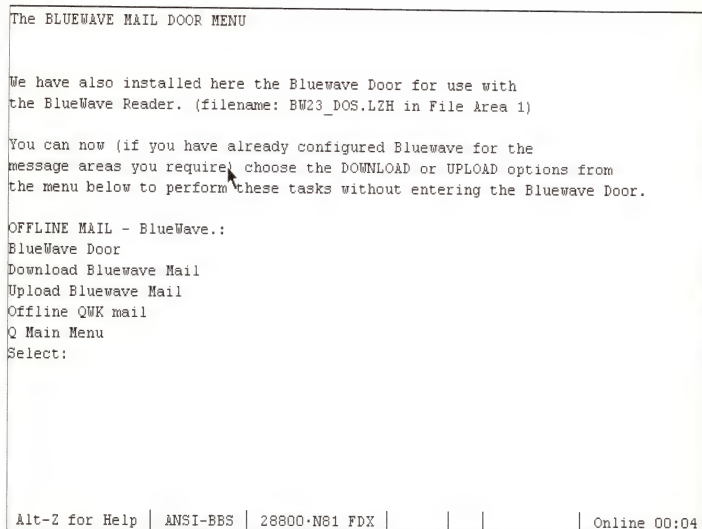


Figure 3. The Blue Wave Door Menu.

that happens, you'll need to hang up and dial back in, this time answering the name prompt with John "X" Brown (X, being your middle initial) and remember to log on using this exact name in the future.

Once you have entered your name, you'll be prompted to answer more questions, including your membership number, and your birth date. This information is not available to anyone except the Sysops. When choosing your password, use something you'll remember, but don't use your name, your pet's name or other obvious words people who know you might easily guess. And don't tell it to anyone else.

After answering the prompts, you'll be given "guest" access to the BBS, just until your data is recorded and confirmed by the office, then you will be upgraded to member access. (This will normally take a couple of days). On the Melb PC BBS "guests" may download files and read messages, but cannot upload messages or files. Guests are limited to 30 minutes online per day. Once you've been upgraded to member access, you can upload and download files and messages (into most areas) and you can be online for 90 minutes each day.

Finding your way around

On Melb PC's BBS you have the option of reading the bulletins, or going straight to the BBS. Read the bulletins to see what's going on. To go directly to the main menu (Figure 2) select **N**.

To the right is a list of information and help files: I'd suggest that you read *New User Help*. To the left is the activities menu—the first two items are the Message and File Areas. Most BBSS will have menus similar to this. Have a browse to familiarise yourself with the basic commands—the worst you can do is cut yourself off!

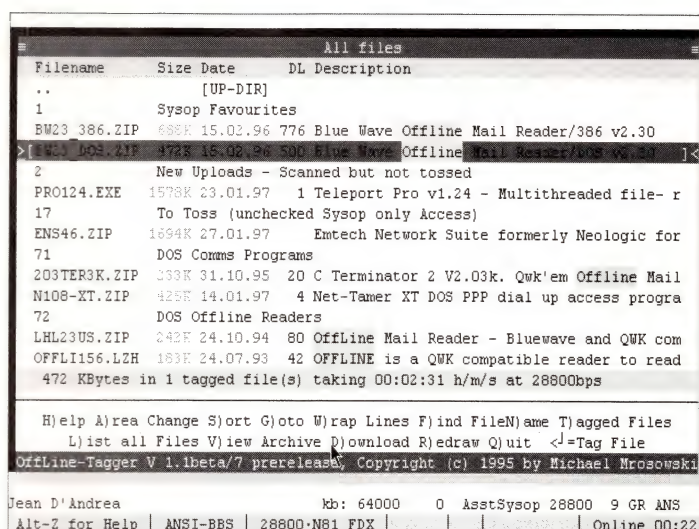


Figure 4. Using File Tagger.

The message area

To look at the message area, select **M**, which gives you another menu. The best area to visit, if you're new to messaging, is *LOC.10*. To go to this area, select **A** for *Area Change*, then type *LOC.10*. To read some messages, use *Browse*, *Current*, and *From*, to enter the message number from which you'd like to read.

Because it's time consuming to read and enter messages online, most members eventually switch to downloading messages, so that they can read and respond to them later, offline.

To leave the *Messages* area, select **Q**. That will take you back to the main menu.

Downloading messages to read offline

To choose the message areas you'd like to download for offline reading, select the *Off-line & Blue Wave Mail* choice from the main menu. From the *Off-line Mail* menu, choose *Blue Wave Door*, (Figure 3) then select *Configuration*, and finally, *Choose Areas for Download*.

Now you're ready to select some message areas. A good area to start with is *General*. Type the number shown against this area, and the options *Personal*, *Personal And All*, and *All* will be displayed. Select *All* by pressing Enter, and you're set up to receive messages from this area in your download packet.

Some areas, such as *Private*, and *Messages to/from the Sysop*, are "forced" (that means that you will get them whenever you download messages), so they'll automatically be included in your packet.

When you've entered the message areas you want, you can review the list by entering **%**. To exit, enter **!**, then **Q** (quit) to return to the *Blue Wave Door Menu*.

From this menu, select **D** (*download*), and the program will send your message packet to your download directory. You did set one up when configuring your

system, didn't you?

Once you're finished, exit the Blue Wave Door and return to the main menu.

So far we've been talking about messages, browsing them online and downloading them to read offline. Now let's visit the *Files Area* and find you an offline reader, so you can open, read and reply to those messages, offline.

Downloading a file with File Tagger

On the main menu, press **F** to go to the *Files Area*. On the next menu, select the *File Tagger* utility, shown as No.1. *File Tagger* command options are listed across the lower part of the screen. (Figure 4) **F** (*Find*) will give you a small box, into which you enter "offline", and a list of all the files that contain "offline"—in the file name or description—will be displayed.

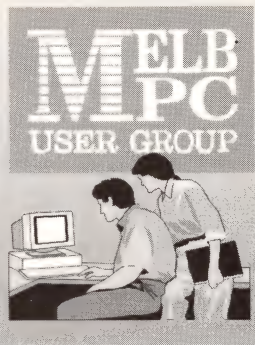
Using the arrow keys, move down the page until the file you want is highlighted. Blue Wave 2.3 is a popular choice. (Figure 4) Press Enter to tag this file. The listing will change colour, and a mark will appear beside it. If this is the only file you want to download, press **D** (*download*), (see Figure 4) and you'll be prompted to choose your download protocol. Zmodem is the best option, so select this. Downloading of your chosen offline reader will begin. If you want to find more files, repeat the process you used to find Blue Wave until you find the ones you want, tagging them as you go. Then download all, as above.

That's not all there is to using a BBS, of course, but it will get you started. Soon you'll be enjoying it immensely. It's a whole new world out there!

About the author

Jean is Assistant Sysop (Messages) on Melb PC's BBS, and is also the committee member with BBS responsibility. She can be contacted through the office; e-mail to jda@melbpc.org.au, or on the BBS. □

Special interest group meetings



CLUB ACTIVITIES

Access (Database)

Ray Watson

(03) 9883 4382 AH
Fax: (03) 9576 9591
2nd Monday, 6.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Assembly & Other Languages

Felix Hofmann

felix@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9523 5400 AH
1st Thursday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Ballarat

Ken Smith

(03) 5332 7851 BH & AH
kensmith@giant.bnc.com.au 1st
Thursday, 7.30 pm
(except school holidays)
Ballarat & Clarendon College
Junior School Campus
614 Mair St Ballarat

Basic

Andrew Callaway

(03) 9619 4067 BH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Bendigo

Russell Collins

(03) 5439 3708
2nd Wednesday, 7.30 pm
Girton Grammar School
(Computer Room)
105 Mackenzie Street
Bendigo (Vine Street entrance)

C/C++ Programming

Ken Holmes

(03) 9583 1504 BH & AH
4th Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Clarion

Alan King

(03) 9882 8044 BH
4th Wednesday, 6.30 pm
Suite 9, 96 Camberwell Road
East Hawthorn
(Through wire gate and up the
stairs on the south-east side of
Roseberry St)

Communications

Philip Lew

(03) 9822 2998 BH
(Brief calls please)
2nd Wednesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Daytime

Felix van Lier

Felixvl@melppc.org.au
(03) 9525 3962 BH & AH
Asst convener: Brian Taylor
2nd Thursday, 10.00 am
Melb PC SIG Room

East

Keith Lane

(03) 9762 6644 Anytime
(03) 9761 1414 Fax
keithln@melbpc.org.au
Asst convener: Stewart Tanner
(03) 9879 9776
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Willis Room, Nunawading Office
of City of Whitehorse
379 Whitehorse Road,
Nunawading
(opposite Harvey Norman)

East Workshop

Aldo Pitre

(03) 9878 7959
aldop@melbpc.org.au
Asst convener: Ian Paterson
(03) 9755 2238
Ring for dates
Unit 11, 27-33 Rooks Road
Mitcham.
(Offices of Haldatec Pty Ltd.)

Freeware and Shareware

Doug Westcott

(03) 9898 2765 AH
dougw@melbpc.org.au
Co-convener: Tony James
3rd Tuesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Graphics

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
Asst convener: Kevin Gorie
3rd Monday, 7.45 pm
We meet in the bungalow at the
rear of Nadish Naoroji's home,
8 Park Crescent
North Caulfield

Hardware

Felix Hofmann

felix@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9523 5400 AH
3rd Wednesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Music

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
Asst convener: Eric Best
(03) 9646 6898 AH
2nd Thursday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, Central

Graham Paul

(03) 9417 5315 AH
3rd Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, East

Doug Brooke

(03) 9822 3458 BH & AH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
St Mark's Anglican Church,
Cnr Canterbury & Burke Rds
Camberwell

OS/2

John Angelico

talldad@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9544 8792
4th Tuesday, 6.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Quicken

Viv Martin

martinv@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9583 5372 AH
4th Thursday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Retired & Interested Persons

Ken Thomas

(03) 9803 6229 BH & AH
4th (not last) Friday, 10.00 am
Lutheran Church
25 Cypress Avenue
Glen Waverley

Turbo Pascal

Ross Hall

(03) 5428 6470 AH
(03) 9699 4000 BH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

UNIX

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
3rd Thursday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Video Editing

Albert Vanzet

(03) 9439 1768
vanzet@melbpc.org.au
4th Monday, 7 pm
Michaels Camera Store
269 Elizabeth Street
Melbourne

Waffle

Vince Thornton

018 171 344 or
Andrew Callaway
(03) 9619 4067 BH
"Eat-ins" after monthly meeting.

Windows

Mikhail Bortolotto

(03) 9888 2360 AH
1st Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Word Processing/DTP

Loraine Briggs

(03) 9563 6396 AH
014 693 882
lbriggs@melbpc.org.au
4th Friday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

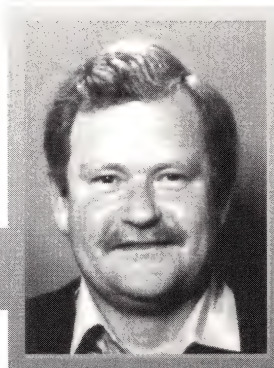
The Blind Citizens Support Group meets at 7.45 pm on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, at 1st Floor, 87 High Street, Prahran. For further details, please contact John Machin, on (03) 9569 1440 (BH).

Conveners: If you would like your e-mail address printed in this list, please send an e-mail message to: editor@melbpc.org.au

SIG meeting reports

CLUB ACTIVITIES

coordinated by Keith Beresford



Daytime

Felix van Lier

At our March meeting Doug Brooke will speak about the BBS. There will be a direct link to the BBS and Doug will demonstrate how it works. Notes will be distributed to those attending this meeting. Doug has years of comms experience, so this will be an excellent opportunity to learn how to get the most of the Melb PC BBS.

Doug will also explain how to configure Telix and Telemate, two comms programs members use to connect to our BBS. This will be your opportunity to resolve BBS connection problems.

The February Daytime SIG report raised the prospect of an Absolute Beginners SIG to start at 9 am prior to the Daytime SIG meeting at 10 am. It was decided that it would be more practical to establish a new SIG, to meet on another day. Full details will be announced as soon as possible. Suggestions from potential members will be greatly appreciated.

We have copies of the "Panic Disk" Tom Coleman prepared for our November meeting. It will be a great comfort to have this disk at your side. Many thanks, Tom.

At a recent survey amongst Daytime

SIG members it was suggested the following should be covered during the year

- Windows 3x and 95
- Printing
- Hardware
- Internet
- Database
- Spreadsheets

It is up to the members to include what they consider will be beneficial. (It is interesting to note that knowledge of the Internet created the greatest interest.)

East

Keith Lane

January

Who says January is a duff month in Melbourne for meetings? We filled the church hall. There was the usual lively question and answer session. It carried on, into the coffee break. As our SIG grows we will face the challenge of keeping the intimacy and friendliness, basic to East's current success. Members with ideas on how we can do this, please ring me on (03) 9762 6644.

Keith Beresford's Tips and Tricks was on batch files and our main speaker was Laurie Rooney of Intronic. Laurie has been involved with printers for more

than 10 years, he's a member of the East SIG and a regular advertiser in *PC Update*. He volunteered to speak on printers, with the understanding that as he concentrates on OKI, that would be the reference for his presentation. His main points:

- Dot-matrix are here to stay for speed and low cost per copy.
- Laser printers have a place, quality reproduction.
- Inkjets are the most expensive to run, but trying to cut costs with substitute inks is more likely to ruin the printer than reduce operation costs. (He gave some pretty alarming examples from his repair bench.)

As I write this, I am looking forward to our February meeting, our first in the Willis Room at the Nunawading Civic Centre. The main speakers are Brian Hollis (Speaking to Groups), Dave Botherway (Using the Internet for Telephony and Video), Keith Beresford (Tips & Tricks—Batch Files and Backups) and Doug Westcott (WinZip, his favourite shareware program).

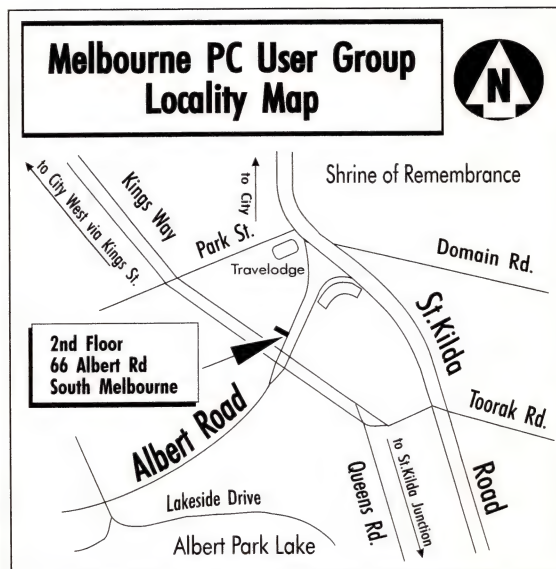
Update on East SIG's Workshops

According to the participants, the East SIG's January Workshop was a spectacular success. The first two hours solved hardware problems, the remaining

Meetings Calendar

(Check with SIG Convener when a SIG meeting falls on a Public or School Holiday)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
First	Windows ‡		Main Monthly Meeting Waffle	Assembly & Other Languages ‡ Ballarat	
Second	Access (Database) ‡	Basic/Turbo Pascal ‡ East New Users, East	Bendigo Communications ‡	Music ‡ Daytime ‡	
Third	Graphics New Users, Central ‡	Committee ‡ Freeware and Shareware ‡	Hardware ‡	UNIX ‡	
Fourth	C/C++ Programming ‡ Video Editing	OS/2 ‡	Clarion	Quicken ‡	Word Processing/DTP ‡ Retired and Interested Persons



‡ Many SIGs meet at Melb PC's premises, on the second floor at 66 Albert Road, South Melbourne.

three covered Win 95, the Internet and file management (one hour per subject).

Workshops are now scheduled for the Sunday following the sig's Tuesday meeting. (16 March, 13 April, 18 May, 15 June, 13 July, 15 August, 14 September, 19 October, 16 November, 14 December.) They will follow the same general format, a hardware workshop, followed by three hours of instruction on three different topics, with plenty of opportunity to discuss your own problems.

We have had outstanding response from invitations issued at the Box Hill swap meet for our meetings. It is true that only Melb PC members have taken up the invitations, but it is clear we are providing a service for members who live in our area.

As a first attempt to gauge East sig participants' interests, we asked attendees at our January meeting to tell us their interests.

Of the people responding (46 or 46%)...

- 65% used the BBS (30)
- 44% were on the Internet (20)
- 28% want to be on the Internet (13)
- 91% use their computer for word processing (42)
- 52% use Windows 95 (24)
- 56% use Windows 3.1x (26)
- 45% use DOS (21)
- None of the respondents is using OS/2
- 35% use their computer for genealogy (16).

March

Our Tuesday meeting will be mostly on the Internet—How it started. Telnet, e-mail, FTP, newsgroups, the web and home shopping. Join us on 11 March 1997, 7.30 pm, Willis Room, Nunawading Civic Centre, 379 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading, Melway Ref. 48 G9). I look forward to meeting you there.

Hardware

Bill Kessler

Although numbers were down members who did turn up came half an hour early, that's keen. We were happy to welcome back David Webster. David took time off last year to study a TAFE course in computing. The

next half an hour was spent discussing the pros and cons of the TAFE course.

Next we discussed

- The requirements for Internet phone.
- The hardware and software needs and the difficulties one would have along the way to success.
- The legal and practical aspects of microfilm and microfiche versus compact disk storage.

A member requires fast SCSI II drivers for an ATA Exebyte DAT tape drive, model exb 8500b. If anyone can help please notify the hardware sig.

We would also like to take this opportunity to wish our members a happy and healthy New Year.

Retired & Interested Persons

Bill Cooney

A smaller than usual turn-up greeted Ken Thomas for our January meeting. Even so, there were about 60 of us, (including a few who were attending for the first time) and we were glad of having made the effort.

Good luck and best wishes to a fellow member

One of our members, Max Collyer, is very unwell at present, having suffered a couple of strokes since we last met. All RIP SIG members joined Ken in wishing Max the strength to come through such a blow. Good luck Max, this might be a good time for a system reboot, hey?

Win 95 and PnP got you stymied?

In addition to the subgroups we already have, there was a suggestion that some of our members might also want to find out more about Win 95 and Plug'n'Play. If you're one of them, see Henk Visser or Leigh Hawke at the next meeting.

Keeping afloat in a sea of information

Our January guest speaker, John Fitzsimons, demonstrated Internet programs. As more and more of us join (or contemplate joining) that scene, John's presentation was a welcome demystifier about that sea of information. Thanks John, well done.

Members' free ads

SAVE A DOLLAR

Member-to-member deals

WANTED

Secondhand copy of Adobe Photoshop "Classroom in a Book", or similar training manual.

Pat Gittins (03) 9584 3432, patg@icplus.net.au

FOR SALE

Printer: Fujitsu DL1100 24-pin colour dot-matrix. Continuous and sheet feed up to A3 size, compact unit, complete with ribbons, manual and in original box. \$110

David (03) 9800 1520, davob@au.ibm.net

Microsoft Office Professional 4.3 with full manual set. \$150

Microsoft Office Professional for Win 95. \$180

Microsoft Publisher 95 Deluxe. \$70

ABC SnapGrafix (drawing tools for Office). \$30

Games: Fury 95 (CD). \$20

Critical Path (CD). \$20

Designasaurus (young kids). \$20

Two VGA Monitors. going, but only just. \$30

Mini PC case and power supply \$30

Macintosh Plus (4 MB + external drive). \$150

Robert (03) 9764 9661

Toshiba T4850CT notebook computer, Intel 486 DX4-75, 500 MB hard disk, 24 MB of RAM, PCMCIA CD-ROM drive, PCMCIA 28.8 kbps modem, active color screen, all drivers for Windows 95, Windows 95 installed with genuine software still in shrink wrap. \$2500

Anthony (03) 9720 7440 or 0417 360 864

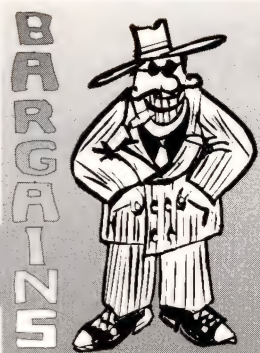
acarvana@onaustralia.com.au

March and April meeting dates

Our normal meeting day for March would have been Good Friday, so instead we will be meeting on Friday 21 March. The April meeting falls on Anzac Day but we will meet as usual on the fourth Friday of April.

Join us

If you've just entered the confusing—but intriguing—world of computing and are wondering how you're going to resolve the questions that naturally follow such a move, a Melb PC sig might be just the ticket. (Naturally I would recommend ours.) Try us, I think you'll be glad you did. □



Novell Network V4.1. 25-user, brand new, never used. \$2,100

Paul (03) 9578 3458

Four 1 MM RAM 30-pin SIMMs. \$5.00 each.

One Interlink Hotlink 4s Fax/Modem 28.8 kbps (V.Fast class) (Fax class I & II) complete with cables, manual and software. \$110

Russ (03) 9772 6502 (AH)

Advertisements from members, for Swap, Wanted, For Sale, Free, etc. are run free of charge.

All ads must be loaded as a file (NB: *not* a message) to the BBS (NB: *not* the Internet) in ASCII format to area PCUP or supplied as an ASCII file on a virus-free non-returnable MS-DOS diskette (any size) and delivered to the Group's Office.

We do not have the time to type your ads, so this service is restricted to electronic advertisements.

Infected disks are thrown out, without attempting to disinfect or recover data!

Members' ads will be included in the first available issue of *PC Update*.

Advertisements must include at least one phone number—if you only want replies via the BBS or Internet, only advertise there.

Are you interested in a Special Interest Group in the Western suburbs?

If so contact the office on (03) 9699 6222

Let's start a SIG in the West.

For the bookshelf

BOOK REVIEW

Lesley Howells



Student's Guide to the Internet

Aimed at university students, this useful book is also valuable to others, especially senior secondary students and adults returning to study.

David Clark takes us step by step through the process of getting connected, discussing the use of dedicated connections and setting up a terminal account, dial-up accounts, and choosing and setting up TCP/IP software. He shows as much of UNIX as you need to know for the Internet, if that is the system available to you. We are then taken through e-mail, USENET news groups, FTP, the World Wide Web, IRC, adding voice and video, MUDs and other games, and creating your own Web page using HTML (the best piece of advice on Web page authoring I have seen—from the Net site, *The art and Zen of Websites*—is, "You should try to hold your breath

for as long as your page takes to load!")

The author addresses the reader directly throughout, using a humorous, often ironic, tone that helps readability while covering the use of the Internet for research, recreation, and business. He includes subject-based lists of resources and mailing lists, FAQs for students and beginners, and addresses for downloading utilities and programs you will need and URLs that are just for fun.

Having learned all that, we are taken through the research strategy that might be used for a hypothetical research essay on *Constructivism in education: theory and practice*. Practising our new skills we use e-mail and usenet groups to post messages asking for help on our topic, search the education database ERIC for suitable journal articles, and search gopherspace for more useful material. We then sift and evaluate the quantities

of useful material gleaned, ready to write our paper. Clark also shows how to cite resources found on the Net.

Although it emphasises the use of UNIX throughout as being the most likely environment available on campus, the book shows at each stage how browsers and utilities for Macintosh and PCs (including Win 95 versions) work. Despite a fairly heavy American bias this is an excellent starting point for students wanting to get connected to the Net.

David Clark:

Student's Guide to the Internet 2nd ed.

Published by Que

ISBN 0 7897 0881 7

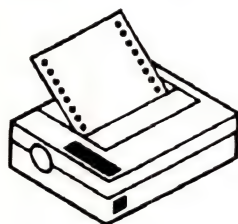
334 pages

RRP \$29.95

Lesley Howells has been a Library Technician in a secondary college for more than 20 years and helps students to use the Internet.

□

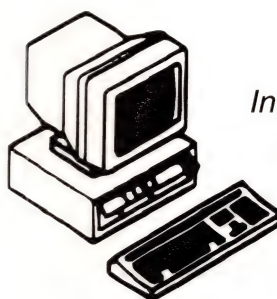
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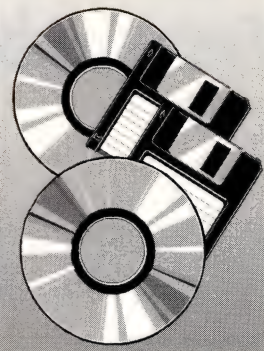
Bayside PC Services

96 Nepean Highway, Mentone. Tel. 9585 1645

Shareware/Freeware library update

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Glenn Webster



Updates

Melb 8001

FRACTINT v19.3

FRACTINT plots and manipulates images of "objects"—actually, sets of mathematical points—that have fractal dimension. These sets of points are generated by relatively simple calculations repeated over and over, they are infinitely complex, and they can be astonishingly beautiful. Version 19.3 now supports arbitrary precision which allows zooming to a depth of 10^{1600} , as well as the generation of random dot stereograms. Other sections of the program have been updated to repair small bugs. The demonstration file included with the disk will show some of the features of FRACTINT. FRACTINT works with many adapters and graphics modes from CGA to the 1024 x 768, 256-colour XGA mode. Larger images, up to 2048 x 2048 x 256, can be plotted to expanded memory, extended memory, or disk: this bypasses the screen and enables you to create images with higher resolution than your current display can handle, and to run in "background" under multi-tasking control programs such as DESQview and Windows 3.

Melb 8002

Hypertext Virus Summary 9612

This program is revised regularly to make available up-to-date information on all known viruses. The hypertext format of the information presented enables quick reference to any virus, variant or related species. The program is now extensively cross-referenced. It can be navigated easily using the menus supplied. This revision covers more than 3690 viruses and variants. Registration for home use is US\$30. Other uses require a site license agreement.

Melb 8273

WinBowl v2.5

WinBowl is a fun, user-interactive bowling game for Windows 3.1 or later. Up to four players can play at one time with any combination of human or computer players. Each player can play at one of three different skill levels. Scoring is based on the traditional 10-pin scoring system. A practice mode is also included to practice specific pin setups. Other features of the game include a 3D game interface, 256 colour graphics, sound support, a help file and a brief throwing tutorial. This update includes the additions of a new 640 x 480 screen resolution, a resizable scorecard, status bar, throw evaluator window, Hall of Fame, the ability to print current scorecards, player definitions for ball colour preference and more recording of statistics. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 3.1 or later and a mouse. A video card and monitor capable of displaying 256 or more colours and a sound card are strongly recommended. Regn is US\$15.

Melb 8341

Winzle! v1.30 (Windows Puzzle)

This Windows puzzle uses stunning images from around the world in Super VGA colour! It is very flexible—you can choose any number of pieces from 4 to 2000! Your best scores can be recorded in the Hall of Fame. Puzzles can be saved for continuing at a later time. The puzzle provides support for 800 x 600 and higher display modes, solution hints, a simple mouse interface, and much more! All puzzles use original photography. This version provides an enhanced catalogue. Winzle! requires an 80386 or later processor, MS Windows 3.1 or IBM OS/2 2.1, SVGA graphics, a mouse and 1 MB of hard disk space. A 256-colour video driver and a Windows-compatible sound board or Windows PC Speaker Driver is recommended. Winzle! also requires VBRUN300.DLL, which is not available on this disk. (It is available on disk Melb 8052). Regn is US\$30.

Melb 8409

CTS Serial Port Utilities v4.2

The CTS Serial Port Utilities (SPU) is a collection of Comm Port setup and control utilities for anyone involved with PC support or with a serial port problem. These utilities detect failed UARTs, more than one port at the same address, PCs which can't use COM4, com ports which can't generate IRQs, shared and conflicting IRQ assignments and nonstandard BIOS port assignments. They will identify which ports have modems, and identify the modems as internal, external, FAX-capable, and FAX class supported. All UART types (including T/Ports, ESP, HSSP & emulated UARTs), actual IRQ and address used are identified also. The BIOS can be updated to match the actual port settings. This version has improved the operation of a number of the utilities in Windows 3.x and Windows 95 "DOS box" environments. You can find most modem installation and setup problems. All Com ports with working modems are clearly identified and modem speeds are reported. Registered users receive additional Windows Setup tests, a printed User Guide/Tutorial and bonus utilities. Requires DOS 2.1 or later, or a DOS session under Windows or OS/2. Regn is US\$20 for personal use. Other registration options are available.

Melb 8434

COMMO v7.00

COMMO is a very powerful, high-performance, communications program. Its script language provides a very high degree of automation and customizing. COMMO is fully DESQview aware and supports OS/2 and Windows. It uses plain text files for setup, dialing directory and macros. It is small in size, loads rapidly and performs all functions with great speed. Visually impaired users with speech synthesizer equipment are supported by COMMO's configurable Speech Friendly Interface. There is extensive context-related online help. Host mode and many other features are available. This

version contains enhancements to some program features and additions to the macro language. Minimum system requirements are DOS 2.1, 128 KB of RAM, one diskette drive and a serial port/internal modem with either an 8250, 16450 or 16550 series UART chip. Registered users have access to additional features. Regn is US\$60 (manual and diskette) or US\$40 (diskette only).

Melb 8440

HyperSnap v2.7

HyperSnap, which was formerly SnapShot/32, brings professional quality, convenient Windows 95 and NT screen captures to your fingertips. Choose your own hot keys that quickly capture the entire desktop, any rectangle you outline, or the highlighted window or client, and automatically save each of your captures to a file by default—you can even trigger new captures every x seconds and have the filename incremented. Print your capture direct from HyperSnap—it will expand the image to the size of the paper and margins that you set, and even add a frame, reverse, or reduce the output to black and white! You can save your image as a BMP, GIF or JPEG file. Optionally, GIF files can be interlaced and can include transparent backgrounds. HyperSnap will create JPEG files, including the new progressive format JPEGs, that are becoming popular on the World Wide Web. BMP graphics can be saved in 16, 256, 64 K or 16 M colours. This version adds the ability to capture an area that is bigger than the screen, making it possible to capture a full length web page and print it with all of the background images. It adds extra keyboard functions for screen capture also. Requires Windows 95 or Windows NT. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 8521 FaxMail for Windows v5.04

FaxMail for Windows adds full faxing capability to all of your Windows applications. It adds a Fax button to your Windows programs to give you access to all the Fax modems and Fax machines in the world, making them become your printers. FaxMail becomes a part of the actual Microsoft Windows environment by appending itself to all system menus thereby adding its features to all Windows applications. FaxMail has many features such as Dynamic View/Edit Cover Page, FaxBook Import and Windows Dynamic All Class Fax/Modem Driver. You can import up to 1000 names and phone numbers into each FaxBook (Phone Book) at a time from any XBase data base program, and you can have as many FaxBooks as you want. New features include Edit Cover Page Logo, Cover Page Help. Includes the "FaxModem Wizard" tools that not only tell you what kind of UART is present on each of your four COM-Ports but what IRQ it is using. FaxMail includes a choice of four installations which support Microsoft Windows 95, Windows 3.1, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 and Windows NT. It supports most Fax/Modems. Regn is US\$25.

Top Choice Shareware

These are some of the most popular volumes in the Melb PC Shareware/Freeware library. Refer to the regular catalogue updates in *PC Update* for up-to-date listings of other disks—use the lower part of this order form for your choice from those listings.

Shareware/PD Title	Melb No.	Format	Qty	Amount
Shareware Catalogue & New Member Disk	0000	3.5 / 5.25		
Graphics Workshop for DOS	8015	3.5		
Graphics Workshop for Windows 3.x	8064	3.5		
Graphics Workshop for Windows 95	8562	3.5		
Growit	8157	3.5		
List	1490	3.5 / 5.25		
McAfee VirusScan for DOS	8018	3.5		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 3.x (2-disk set)	8626/27	3.5		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 95 (2-disk set)	8664/65	3.5		
MS-DOS 6.22 Stepup from 6.0 (3-disk set)	8110-12	3.5		
PKZip/PKUnzip	1235	3.5 / 5.25		
Real Audio Player for Windows 3.x	8364	3.5		
Real Audio Player for Windows 95	8592	3.5		
Telix for DOS	8062	3.5		
Telix for Windows v1.00 (2-disk set)	8129/30	3.5		
Wolfenstein Fights Street Fighter II	8012	3.5		
Melb PC Internet kits (special prices)				
Windows 3.x @\$10 per set (3-disk set)	8711-13	3.5		
Windows 95 @\$20 per set (6-disk set)	8714-19	3.5		
		3.5 / 5.25		
		3.5 / 5.25		
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Credit Card No. <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Signature	Date / /

Melb 8679 MIDNIGHT EXPRESS v1.3

MIDNIGHT Express is a real-time, wavetable MIDI player which does all of its work in software. It will run with any sound card (correctly installed under Windows 95) capable of playing 16-bit stereo, 22050 Hz digital audio. It can also copy its output to a WAV file for quick and dirty MIDI to WAV rendering. While MIDNIGHT Express is designed to work alongside WAVmaker for Windows 95/NT, it can also run as a standalone player, and a simple renderer. This version is a minor bug fix release, as such, includes no extra enhancements. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 95 or later, a 16-bit sound card and 1 MB of hard disk space. Regn is free to registered WAVmaker users.

Melb 8683 Windows ENFORCER v2.1

Windows Enforcer protects systems that are accessible to many people and require a consistent configuration and a consistent, limited selection of services. This is accomplished by ensuring that specified tasks either never run or always run. It is easy to configure and requires little to no modifications to your current system configuration. This version adds the Execution Optional task setting and removes of the 50 task limit on the number of pre-defined tasks. It now runs from the System Tray instead of from the Taskbar. Windows Enforcer requires Windows 95 or later and a mouse. Regn is US\$5.

Melb 8720-8722 Paint Shop Pro v4.12 for Win 95/NT (3-disk set)

Paint Shop Pro is a Photo Retouching, Painting, Image Format Conversion, and Screen Capturing program for Windows. It supports eight different brush styles (pen, pencil, marker, crayon, chalk, charcoal, airbrush, and paintbrush) for editing existing images, or for creating your own. The Photo Retouching Tools provide easy touch-up, blending and duplication of image areas, quick selection of similar areas for manipulation and detail enhancement in small areas. The Image Enhancement and Editing tools enable you to perform flip, mirror, rotate, and crop operations, add borders and frames, and resize and resample your image. Paint Shop Pro ships with 20 standard image filters and you can create your own filters as well. It also includes 12 image deformations, including skew and circle. With Paint Shop Pro, you can alter the hue, saturation, lightness and RGB levels of any image. Adjustments to brightness and contrast and changes to highlight, shadow and mid-tone can also be made. The thumbnail image browser enables you to visually search directories for images. Paint Shop Pro provides support for over 36 file formats including the Transparent GIF, Transparent PNG and Progressive JPEG formats highly sought after for web page graphics. It requires Windows 95/NT4.0, 8 MB of RAM, a VGA or better video card and monitor and a mouse. Regn is A\$110. This program has been reissued as a three-disk set. Previous versions on disks Melb 8616, 8617, 8684 and 8685 have been deleted.

New Disks

Melb 2591 DUNCE v2.4

DUNCE is the Dial-Up Networking Connection Enhancement utility. It adds features to your Dial-Up Networking connections such as bypassing Connect To, Auto Reconnect, Automated Connections, and Run Items. It requires an 80386-33 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM, Windows 95 or later and Dial-Up Networking installed on your system. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 2592 MSIE Cache Explorer v1.10

MSIE Cache Explorer provides for easy offline access to all Web pages that have been cached by the Internet Explorer. It contains full text search and the ability to extract entire document trees. Organizing functions, such as intelligent domain sorting, and hiding and deleting documents, helps you to keep track of important things in the browser's cache. It requires Internet Explorer v2.0 or later and Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 2593 WinGo for Windows 95 v1.4

WinGO adds an icon to the System Tray (where the clock is located) which, when clicked, brings up a menu containing shortcuts to the folders you use most often. Selecting a shortcut opens an Explorer window on that folder. This latest version causes the menus, dialog boxes and help to be displayed in English, French, German or Japanese (requires Japanese Windows 95). WinGO requires Windows 95, 400 KB hard disk space and a mouse. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 2594 WinZip Self-Extractor v2.0

WinZip Self-Extractor is an optional add-on for WinZip that creates native Windows self-extracting ZIP files that are only about 12 KB larger than the original ZIP file. End users without an unzip program can just double click on a self-extracting ZIP file to unzip it with a familiar Windows interface. Self-extracting ZIP files are ideal for sending software, documents or graphic images to colleagues or clients who may be unfamiliar with data compression. This version creates 16-bit or 32-bit Windows self-extracting files that can be run under Windows or MS-DOS. It even includes a Wizard to simplify the process of building self-extracting files. It has improved automation and customization for software installation, such as the ability to specify an icon and text for the main dialog box, and to delete temporary files after running a setup program. Requires Windows 3.1 or later and a utility like WinZip to create standard ZIP files. Regn is US\$49. (WinZip for Windows 3.x and Windows 95 is available on disk Melb 8345).

Melb 8723 FirstBASIC Compiler v1.00

The FirstBASIC Compiler (from PowerBASIC Inc.) enables you to create fast executable programs that you can freely distribute without royalty. It is a complete development environment with an integrated editor, debugger and object linker. It includes an extensive context-sensitive help system that makes learning FirstBasic a snap. FirstBasic will give you unlimited string space, help you to eliminate round-off errors, and speed-up your programs with or without a math co-processor. It has built-in array sorting and searching and file and record locking. It has dozens of built-in functions that eliminate the need to write involved routines for every-day tasks such as SORT, SCAN, VERIFY, REPEAT, INSERT/DELETE, EXTRACT, REPLACE, REMOVE, TALLY, MIN, MAX and many more. New data types such as extended-precision (80 bit) float, Quad word (64 bit) integers and Flex strings are included to make your computation faster and more accurate. The built-in debugger does it all; single step, breakpoints, watch variables, and immediate expression evaluation and modification. Registration provides an on-line User's Guide, a command line compiler and a utility to customize the editor, change the screen colours, set-up your own hot-keys, and more. FirstBASIC was featured in the February 1997 issue of PC Update. Regn is US\$25.

Melb 8724 PowerBASIC for DOS v3.2

This evaluation version of PowerBASIC contains a compiler and development environment and a context-sensitive help file. It provides a level of functionality never before available in Basic. Some of its many features include a built-in assembler; pointer variables (both code and data); bit operations along with implied bit arrays; unions; unsigned byte/word/dword variables, currency variables with user-defined precision; and much more. TSRS can be written in just five lines of code! PowerBASIC provides full support for COM1, COM2, COM3, COM4, even using any of the nonstandard IRQ lines and port addresses at speeds up to 115,200 Baud. All of the language features of the compiler are fully functional, but source code cannot be loaded or read in (it must be typed each time). Source files may be saved for later use with the full (registered) version of PowerBASIC 3.2. There is no limit to the size of source text. PowerBASIC requires DOS 3.3 or later, 640 KB of RAM and 2 MB of hard disk space. PowerBASIC was featured in the February 1997 issue of PC Update. Regn is US\$149.

Melb 8725 Windows in Time v2.1

Windows in Time is a chronological program that lets you decide which people and events to include in the timeline. You can sort and select by individual people and events, or groups and factions, developing new insights and tracing patterns across different eras and cultures. You can modify or expand the datasets that are included. Windows In Time can be used by history and art students, teachers, genealogists, lawyers, writers and anyone interested in exploring historical relations or cultural events. This version includes maps, photos and other images to bring people and events to life. The datasets that are included in this shareware version cover the first millennium, the renaissance and the time between the American and French revolutions. Requires an 80286 processor, Windows 3.x or later, 1 MB of hard disk space and a mouse. Regn is US\$30.

Melb 8726 Becky! v1.00

Becky! is a multi-featured Internet E-mail client for Windows 95. It has many useful functions which should be expected for E-mail software and some of them would be beyond your expectation. Some of its features include a Windows Explorer-like look and feel, the ability for multiple accounts management (you can manage up to 10 mail accounts), and switch to each of them quickly. It is possible to use every operation offline (except sending and receiving). An extra feature of the program is clickable URL and E-mail address. If a URL or E-mail address is found in a E-mail message, it is displayed in the another colour. Double clicking URL lets the URL activate in Netscape, and double clicking an E-mail address opens a compose window for the address. Requires MS Windows 95 or later and a POP3 mail account. Regn is US\$40 for personal use, US\$400 for a site license and US\$800 for a world wide license.

Melb 8727 Windows FTP Daemon v2.20

Windows FTP Daemon is a Windows program that enables you to set up your machine as an FTP site. It runs under Windows 3.1, Windows 95 and Windows NT, and it is one of the fastest servers available. It is easy to configure through Windows dialogs, and requires no direct editing of INI files or of Registry databases. Version 2.20 adds capabilities for resuming interrupted transfers, the ability to pull up a directory selection dialog whenever c

directory is required to be entered, and makes it easy to alter the IP address and port listened to by WFTPD. WFTPD provides RFC compliance to 959 & 1123 (in other words, it's a real FTP server), and support for the majority of documented FTP commands (and some undocumented commands). It provides multiple logins and simultaneous transfers, and has full browser compatibility. Sites can be made read-only or read-only to anonymous users, at the click of a button. Secured access can be provided by password authentication. It can run 'invisible' with no user access to the program and log logins, anonymous logins, gets, puts, commands, warnings and more. A status bar display of the count of users, and the number of sockets in use is available also. Windows FTP Daemon requires an 80486-75 or later, 8 MB of RAM, Windows 3.1/95/NT, a mouse and a Winsock 1.1 or later driver. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 8728 WinVN v0.998

WinVN is a Windows 95/NT-based on-line news reader that can be used to select, view, and write Usenet News articles and send mail via SMTP or MAPI. It has built in MIME and UU-encoding and decoding to send and receive files via the internet. WinVN uses less memory and screen space, making it ideal for both small and large machines. It can handle multiple users and news feeds on one PC. It requires Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0, 8 MB of RAM and an internet connection. This program is Public Domain software, and as such, the source code is available from the author.

Melb 8729 Art Quiz Jigsaw Puzzle v1.40 for Win 3.x/95

This is the jigsaw puzzle game for art lovers of all ages. It contains stunning images of famous paintings that can be broken up into pieces and re-assembled with or without the help of the program. Users can set the number of pieces (from 9 to 2000). Additional sets of puzzle pictures are available on a wide variety of subjects. Art Quiz requires an 80386 or later processor, Windows 3.1 or later and about 3 MB of hard disk space. The registered version comes with 2 sets of 6 additional pictures of famous paintings. Regn is UK£15.

Melb 8730 BrainsBreaker

BrainsBreaker is a game for Windows which allows you to play jigsaw style puzzles in a realistic way. This package comes with a set of puzzles, each with a set number of pieces for evaluation. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM, 2 MB of free hard disk space, a VGA or better video card and monitor, a sound card, Windows 3.1 or later in Enhanced mode and a mouse.

Melb 8731 Runes for Windows v1.0

Runes is a true brain twister for those who love solving logic puzzles. You play the character of Marcus Flavius, a Roman scholar who has been sent by the Senate of Rome to discover the secret of the Oracle of Runes. Marcus's task is to reach the doorway in each puzzle by strategically stacking the marble blocks that are strewn about each room. Requires an 80486-50 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM and Windows 3.1/95 or later.

Melb 8732 WINBA v1.97

WINBA is a Windows based NBA Basketball fans guide. You can use the program to generate predictions, schedules, player and team ratings and other information for basketball fans. This version is ready for the 1996-97 season. Requires Windows 95 or later, 4 MB of RAM and a mouse. Regn is US\$10.

Melb 8733 Soccer Management Simulator v2.0

Soccer Management Simulator is a soccer strategy game for Windows 3.1 and Windows 95. Your role is the manager of any club in the English leagues, including the prestigious Premier League. You can buy, sell and trade players with any club, and approach any player to create your own super team of world soccer players. Full statistics on each player are available with a play by play description of the game. Requires an 80486 or faster processor, MS Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 and a mouse.

Melb 8734 Ultra Logic v1.1

Ultra Logic is a Windows 95 implementation of the famous Master Mind board game. Some of the programs features include three preset game levels, background music, game statistics and a customizable board size. Ultra Logic also incorporates extensive context-sensitive, online help. It requires Windows 95 or later, a mouse and a sound card. Regn is US\$5.

Melb 8735 World Cup '96 v1.0

World Cup '96 enables you to play in the 1996 Wills 1-Day World Cup against the computer. You can pick any of the 12 teams to play as. The computer handles and plays as the remaining teams. The program uses authentic team and player data, and keeps a record of scores and statistics. The program allows you to select players and set options such as aggression, team order, field, etc, from the entire country's squad. An icon-based display of every over, wicket, pitch, etc, is used to give a ball by ball commentary. A full scoreboard and worm-graph is also included. An additional mode of play provides for single one-day internationals against any team. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 3.1 or later, 4 MB of RAM and 1 MB of hard disk space. Regn is US\$15

Melb 8736 PrimaSoft Label Printer v1.00

PrimaSoft Label Printer is a flexible utility for printing labels. All common Avery labels are predefined in the programs settings. Different fonts for the label body, header and footer can be selected. A logo can be included in the printed label. It also incorporates Print Preview, so that you can see how a label will look when printed. Data for labels can be imported from standard text files into Label Printer. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM, 3 MB of hard drive space, a printer able to print labels and a keyboard. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 8737 AMF Intelligent Organ v2.0

AMF Intelligent Organ/Synthesizer for Windows is the first organ to offer features such as 127 instrument/voice selection, volume control, octave control and recording as well as playback capability. This organ actually looks and works like an organ. It has an auto playback feature so that you can listen to what you have just written or modified. The program requires Windows 3.1, or later, and a sound card with MIDI support and drivers. Regn is US\$12.

Melb 8738 AMF Multimedia Jukebox v2.0

AMF Multimedia Jukebox is a multimedia file player and viewer, providing AVI, MID, WAV, VOC, MOV, FLI/FLC and other formats to be viewed. AMF Multimedia Jukebox incorporates a 3D interface and

custom settings for video playback to allow full control of a multimedia experience. Many preprogrammed lists of your selections may be saved, and opened with one mouse click. Requires Windows 95 or later, a sound card and a mouse. Regn is US\$10.

Melb 8739 CD Wizzard v4.0

CD Wizzard is an Audio CD Player for Windows 95 or later. It has all the functions of a home CD player and many more. It saves the disc and track names in its database. CD Wizzard has a full 3D look that is totally customizable. In icon mode, the icon is updated with the disc and track time. A comprehensive help file available with descriptions of all of the features of CD Wizzard. Requires an 80486 or faster processor, Windows 95/NT 4.0 and a mouse. A SVGA video card and monitor are recommended. Regn is US\$20.

Melb 8740 95 System Backup

95 System Backup saves important Win95 system files to a floppy disk, network drive or local hard drive. It saves desktop settings, all 32-bit programs, hardware and software settings, and user information. This can save you a lot of time if you must reinstall Win95 after a crash. Requires Windows 95 or later and sufficient disk space for backup. Regn is US\$20 for a single user and US\$25 for a multi-user network version.

Melb 8741 TimeTree v1.1

TimeTree is an international alarm clock and scheduler for Windows 95 or Windows NT 3.51 (or later). You can display the time and date of multiple locations simultaneously on a customizable digital clock. It has references to over 500 carefully researched cities and area codes world wide, or you can add your own. It includes daylight saving time variations. Alarms can trigger other programs or play multimedia files (AVI or WAV). It is ideal for international business or travel. Requires Windows 95/NT 3.51 or later and a sound card to play audio files and sound alarm.

Melb 8742 VBSystem Resource Monitor v3.2

VBSystem is a System Monitor for Windows 95 and Windows NT. It has been designed to help a user monitor many system resources at all times and to combine some utilities that you may already use. It will monitor disk space (even on network drives), memory, swapfile usage, CPU usage, number of processes, system date and time, and much more, all in one small display. It has an easy-to-use, customizable display. It requires Windows 95 or MS Windows NT 4.0. Regn is US\$10.

Melb 8743 WinU v3.02

WinU is a full Windows 95 user interface replacement with timeout and security access control features. It would be ideal for parents who want to limit children's use of the family PC, or for retail stores that want to provide public access to their computers yet prevent accidental or malicious system modifications. Requires an 80386 or faster processor and Windows 95. Regn is US\$30.

Melb 8744 CompuShow for Windows v1.0

CompuShow for Windows has all of the ease of use and intuitive design that made CompuShow the world standard graphic viewer for DOS, now in a Windows 3.x, 95 and NT application. This is a fully-functional shareware release, to view, print and convert graphics, as well as to play multimedia

files (movies, sound and music) and to encode and decode Internet e-mail. It requires Windows 3.1 or later, 4 MB of RAM and a mouse. A sound card is required to play multimedia files.

Melb 8745 People Clip Art v2.0

This package contains 30 ready-made colour clip art images of people at work and at play. The images are in standard PCX format and may be used in any program that can import standard PCX 256-colour format files. The images include an artist, babies, bank, business, construction, cleaning, florist, dancing, chef, groom, hippie, landscape, doctor, nurse, musician, police, sports, romance, student, teacher and more. The images are only a sample of the 200 images in the complete set. The installation program will show you the 30 samples prior to installation and it will show small samples of all 200 images in the complete set when installation has been completed. Requires Windows 3.1 or later and 800 KB of hard disk space. Registration provides the complete set of 200 nonwatermarked images (at a higher resolution). Regn is \$US25.

Melb 8746 Photo Icons v1.30

Photo Icons is a professional icon processing tool that enables you to create and modify Windows icons at any colour depth (up to 24-bit or true colour). Using a high performance imaging toolkit developed by LEAD Technologies, an industry leader in imaging technology, Photo Icons enables you to convert any image of any size and any colour depth into the standard Windows icon format (32 x 32) at 16, 256, 65536, and 16.7 million colours. A screen capture utility is also provided so that you can capture any area of the screen into an icon. Photo Icons is the ultimate icon utility you will ever need to create or modify photo-realistic icons. Photo Icons also enables you to extract icons embedded inside DLL/EXE files and to save them under ICO format. For added convenience, a TWAIN interface is also available so that you can scan any images directly into icons. It requires Windows 95 or later, a VGA or better video card and monitor and a mouse. A TWAIN-compliant scanner and a printer supported by Windows is optional. Regn is US\$29 for the standard version, or US\$43 for one with scanning capability. □

Reinstalling: Watch it!

A WARNING

Ron Kitchenn

WordPerfect 5.2, living with Windows 3.1, had been a very congenial companion. But when Windows 3.1 had to be reinstalled (that's another long and sorry story), WordPerfect 5.2 behaved sulkily, muttering a warning that it couldn't load printer information, and that the probable cause was lack of memory or of disk space. What nonsense! There were bucketfuls of both. All the other applications called from Windows behaved perfectly, although the titles under the icons in all groups appeared in a strange, large font.

So WordPerfect was banished from the hard disk, and reinstalled from scratch. Alas—the same result, except that this time the error message appeared only when the Windows (but not the WordPerfect) printer drivers were summoned. The rather limited WordPerfect (non-TrueType) fonts now worked nicely, but where were those

essential Windows TrueType fonts?

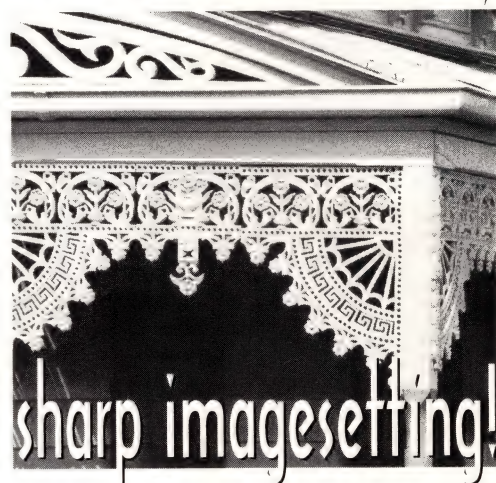
After much unrewarded consultation and poring through files, it seemed certain that the problem lay in Windows, not in WordPerfect. At last, a clue was found in Windows Setup/Fonts, which was empty. Strange! That hadn't happened on the original Windows loading, had it? Let's select a few TrueType fonts and see what happens. WordPerfect was now word perfect, and all troubles had vanished.

But something else had vanished, too. That ugly large font under Windows icons was now replaced by the original elegant small font. Hooray!

Moral 1: When WordPerfect tells you it can't load printer information, that's maybe not the whole truth, and perhaps nothing to do with the printer files.

Moral 2: On reinstalling Windows 3.1 (yes, there are still some of us around who have to do it), avoid hours of frustrating diagnosis by checking every detail in Setup. □

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Asymetrix WebPublisher

SOFTWARE REVIEW



Bob Burt

Info Box

Asymetrix WebPublisher

Minimum system requirements

- 80486-33 processor
- Math coprocessor
- 8 MB RAM
- Windows 95/NT 3.51
- CD-ROM drive
- 22 MB of free disk space
- Graphics adapter card capable of displaying at least 256 colours at 640 x 480 resolution
- Windows-compatible mouse

Optional

- Internet service provider or server for deploying completed Web documents
- 14.4 kbps modem, or faster
- Netscape Navigator 2.0 or comparable Web browser

Availability and cost

Distributed by
Asymetrix Asia Pacific
26 Balaclava Road
Caulfield North VIC 3161
Ph: (03) 9500 1333
Web: <http://www.asymetrix.com.au>

Available at Harvey Norman stores
and computer resellers

RRP: \$199

The rapid growth and development of the World Wide Web in the past year or two will not have gone unnoticed by regular Internet users. Graphic design has improved enormously, introducing animation, audio and video, resulting in very pleasing presentations, but, at the same time, greatly increasing the complexity of the material that must be prepared to display the Web pages.

Another result of this development has been a continuous need to upgrade the Web browsers, such as *Netscape Navigator* and *Microsoft Internet Explorer*, essential to correctly display the new features of these sophisticated sites. The original *Hypertext Markup Language* (HTML) has necessarily increased in complexity, to allow the use of multimedia helper applications (plug-ins) and even a new programming language, called *Java*.

A parallel progression has been the much greater availability in recent times of Web site space for individuals and small businesses through Internet service providers.

In response to this, there are more and better authoring tools available to prepare Web pages. Many of those available on the Net were competently reviewed recently by John Poulidakis in *PC Update*, August 1996.

Asymetrix WebPublisher (WP) is a Web page authoring tool aimed particularly at entry-level users who don't have the time, or perhaps the inclination, to learn complex tools or skills for professional Web publishing.

aimed at users

who don't have

time to learn

complex tools

Content and installation

WP is supplied on CD-ROM, but needs to be installed on your hard disk. You will need 22 MB of free disk space to install the program, but will actually use up about 16 MB of it on completion. Most of this is required to accommodate 23 templates, so if you are tight on free space after installation, you can remove those that you are unlikely to need, perhaps after viewing them to make your decisions.

The slim accompanying User's Guide—just nine pages of descriptive material—is sized to fit inside a standard CD-ROM plastic case.



Figure 1. Introductory screen.

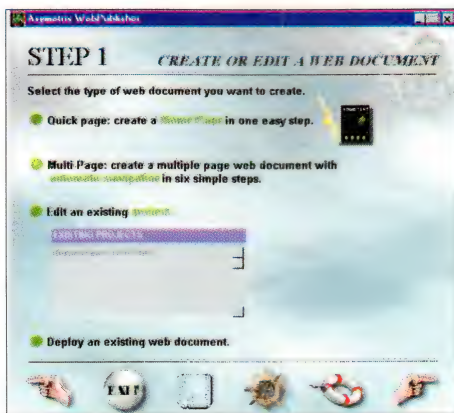


Figure 2. Create/Edit a web document.

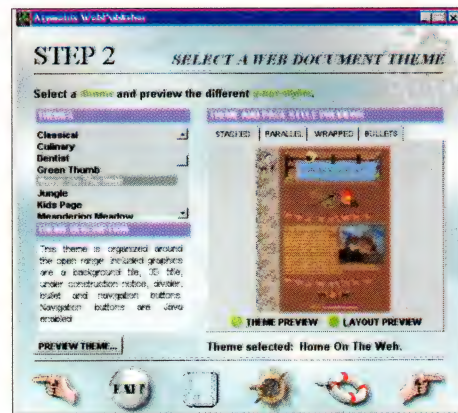


Figure 3. Select a theme.

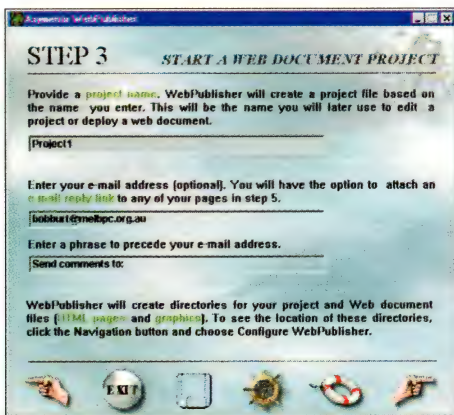


Figure 4. Start a project.



Figure 5. Structure the document.



Figure 6. Customise the document.

Learning the program

WP has been designed for you learn its useage entirely from material that appears on your screen. While the User's Manual contains simple instructions on how to start and exit WP, no details are given on how to actually work with it. You can, as you would expect, use the online Help, but even this is deliberately rather limited. You gain most of your information by running a separate program called the *WebPublisher Guide*. This is a comprehensive Web document containing information about the Internet and designing Web documents with WP. It was created with WP and contains many examples of other Web documents also created with WP. So it is the best starting point for you if you are not familiar with publishing on the Internet, or simply if you want to see what WP is capable of doing.

However, if you already have some experience of the Internet and are generally comfortable with using a mainstream Windows program, you will find that you can create Web documents immediately, simply by making selections from a sequence of screens offered to you when you start WP.

Creating Web documents

The basis of this system of creating professional-looking Web pages lies in the provision of *Theme Templates*. There are more than 20 of these, their topics including Home on the Web, Jungle, Art Glass, Business, Classical, Real Estate, Kids Page, Travel and Ocean Mist. Asymetrix has a Web site, <http://www.asymetrix.com.au>, from which further templates are on offer. At the time of writing, three such templates were available—Midnight, Aviation and WebGourmet—and others will come online later. The site also provides the latest updated version of the *WebPublisher Guide*.

Typical of the kind of material available in the templates is the Green Thumb theme. This is organised around the garden and contains graphics for a back-ground tile, a 3D title, an "under construction" notice, divider, bullet and navigation buttons. The navigation buttons are Java-enabled.

WP's interface guides you through each step required to prepare your Web pages and prompts you for which button to click, text to enter or whatever other action is required. You start with deciding whether to create a single Home page or a multi-page document. Then you select

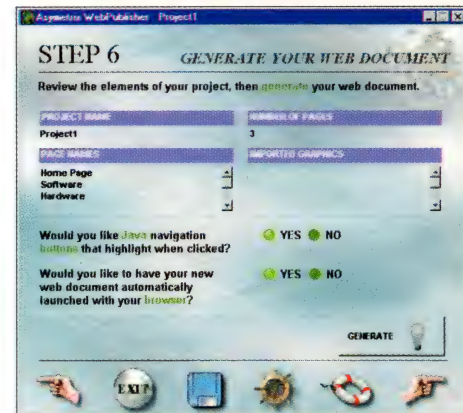


Figure 7. Generate the document.

the particular theme you wish to employ and move on to providing a project name and your e-mail address. Design of your Web document structure then follows, by dragging pages from the illustrated page styles into the project list. You then have the options of including an "under construction" notice or providing an e-mail address for any of your pages.

You next customise your masterpiece by adding titles, graphics or text for each of your pages. You can, of course, use your own previously prepared graphics images (.BMP, .JPG or .GIF formats) or text



Figure 8. The document in Netscape 3.0.

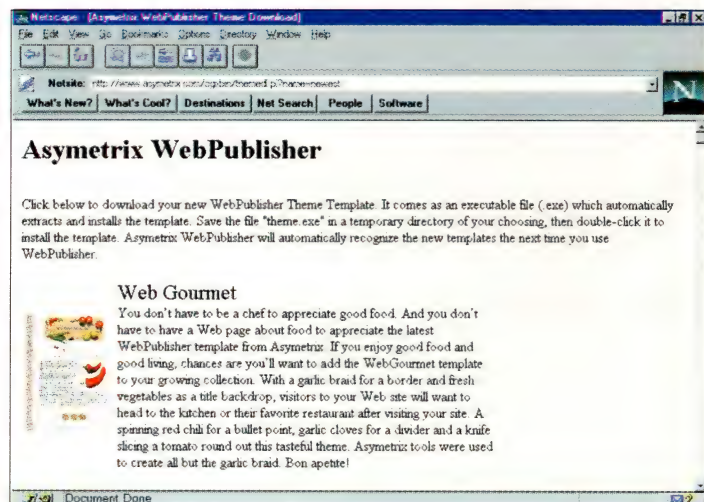


Figure 9. Obtain additional theme template.

files (.TXT or .RTF formats) that you have stored on either your hard disk or floppies, or perhaps available from a CD-ROM. Then you are ready to review your material, decide whether you want Java-type buttons (that animate when clicked), generate your Web document, and automatically start your Web browser and view your creation in it. If you find after viewing your new material that you need to make some changes, you simply backstep through the WP screens to edit.

The final screen enables you to transfer your Web documents to your Internet service provider (ISP) or to a company network (intranet) server. To transfer to your ISP you require the filename, the FTP host, user name, password, account and destination directory. For network deployment you require the filename and destination directory. That's it!

Discussion

WP really is a very simple program to learn and use. You can experiment freely, since you can backtrack as many times as you like and only transfer your handiwork to the Internet when you are ready. You can add, delete or modify page layout and content at will.

Despite its operational simplicity, WP can be used to prepare a very sophisticated battery of pages, complete with illustrations, animated buttons and hyperlinks. If bulleted page layouts are

selected, text entries are automatically converted. Unlike most of its competitors, it has built-in capacities for you to preview your development work in a Web browser and to generate 3D titles, both very useful time-saving features. A table of contents with their hyperlinks is automatically added to the home page, again saving time.

WP creates separate subdirectories for each project and automatically saves the data files to them.

Conclusion

This program works very smoothly, has a logical format, is easy to use and gives a reliable output. It should be of particular interest to community-based organisations. □

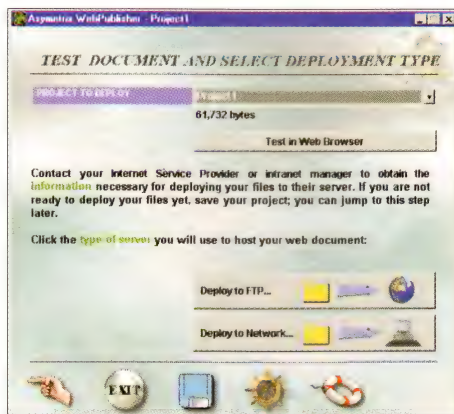


Figure 10. Test and deploy to the Internet.

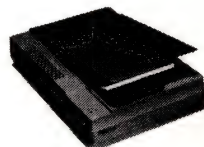
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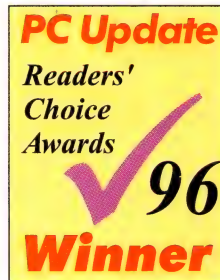
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SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bob Burt



Visio is a relatively recent contender in the field of illustrative packages with a “drag and drop” approach to business diagram preparation. It is fast becoming recognised as a sound and effective graphics program. Version 4.0 has been available since August, 1995 and was thus launched in much the same timeframe as Windows 95. I reviewed the International (English) version, which became available a little later.

The package

Visio 4 comes in an attractively designed box and the program is presented in both 3.5-inch disk and CD-ROM format. Two manuals are provided: a slim volume outlining the basic operating techniques used for the program and a more ambitious manual entitled "Creating Business Diagrams with Visio." Both are very well designed and liberally illustrated.

Installation

If you are using the 3.5-inch disks, then you will need anywhere between 6 and 19 MB of hard disk space, depending on how much optional material you elect to install. You have even more flexibility if you are using the CD-ROM, as you can

Info Box

Visio 4

Minimum system requirements

- 386 IBM-PC or compatible computer, with a 25 MHz (or faster) processor
- Windows 3.1 with 4 MB RAM for the 16-bit version
- Windows 95 with 8 MB RAM or Windows NT 3.51 with 16 MB RAM for the 32-bit version
- VGA, Super VGA, XGA or 8514/A graphics card
- A Windows-compliant mouse

Availability and Cost

Any large software retailer

RRP: \$349

Street price: \$242—shop around

Upgrade price: \$139

additionally decide to run the program (understandably more slowly) from the disc, in which case only 1 MB or so of hard disk space is used.

Both the 16- and 32-bit versions are included and the installation setup will automatically install the correct version for Windows 3.1x (16-bit) or Windows 95/NT 3.51 (the speedier 32-bit). There is, however, a switch available to enable you to install the 16-bit version on the more recent platforms if you so wish.

The optional material includes three online manuals provided in Adobe Acrobat format, presented in much the same style as the hard copy manuals. The Acrobat Reader v2.0 is supplied. You need to install it to read the manuals, unless you already have a copy of it, or a later version on your hard disk.

The program

If you are familiar with *ABC Flowcharter* or *CorelFLOW* in their latest versions, then you would not find too many initial surprises in Visio, although there are, in fact, plenty of subtle differences. This program, like the others, is based on the use of templates which contain the shapes you wish to “drag and drop” to prepare your diagram. You arrange your shapes in the drawing area, connect them, add text to them if needed and create a title. You can embellish by modifying the look of shapes, designing your own shapes, adding colours or changing fonts. You then include your diagram in another program or print it.

My Visio program interface has the *Microsoft Office* look, with all the familiar buttons plus the extras needed for a

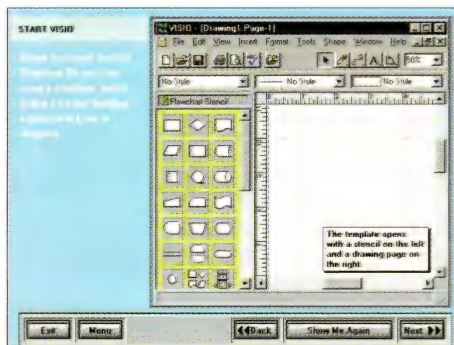


Figure 1. Start of the tutorial.

comfortable and

smooth to work

with and logical

in its actions

business diagram package. Visio supports the *Binder* feature in Microsoft Office for Windows 95 which gathers pages from multiple applications into a single document. I understand that a switchable user interface enables *Lotus SmartSuite* or *Novell PerfectOffice* users to work within their most familiar environment, but I was unable to check this.

Templates

After start-up and whenever you invoke *File|New*, you may select a template from the following range

- Basic
- Block diagram (standard or perspective)

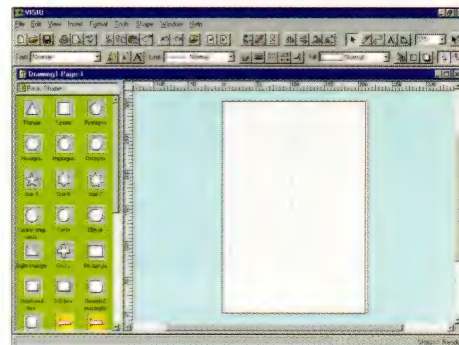


Figure 2. Visio ready for action.

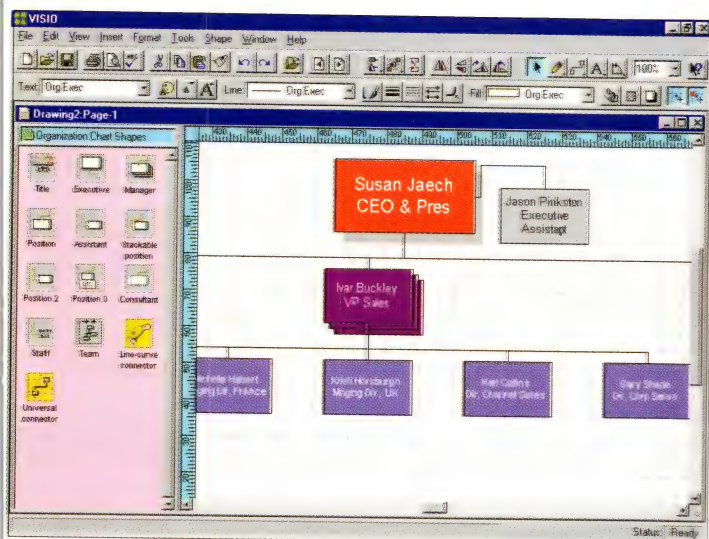


Figure 3. Organisation chart prepared with the Wizard.

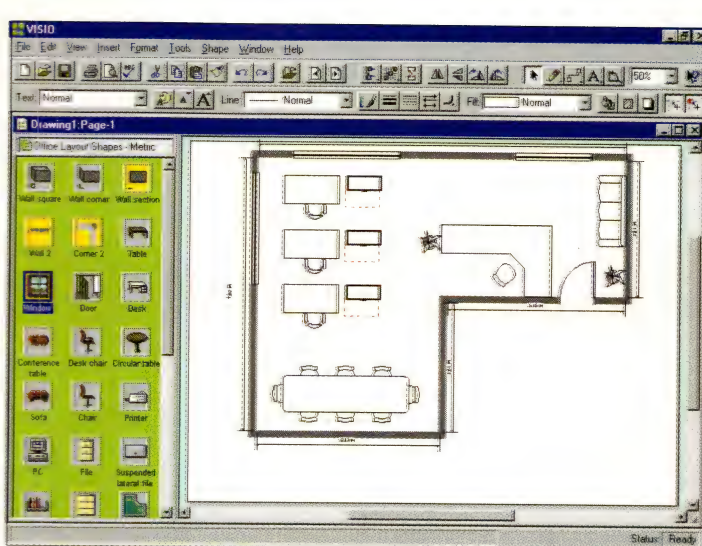


Figure 4. Office layout, prepared to scale.

- Chart
- Demo
- Flowchart
- Forms
- Maps (choice of four)
- Network
- Office layout (imperial or metric)
- Orgchart
- Project timeline
- Total quality management

The *Perspective Block Diagram* template is new to Visio 4. It enables you to create perspective diagrams by adding shapes to a page associated with a vanishing point. You can move the vanishing point to change the perspective. Also new is *Mind Mapping Diagrams*. This rather unusual collection of shapes is available to prepare diagrams typically used by management consultants in brainstorming sessions with their clients.

Wizards

As an alternative to selecting a template, you may elect to start a Wizard, which guides you through the process for which it has been designed to assist

- Flowchart
 - Office layout
 - Orgchart
 - Project timeline
 - Total quality management
- f, for example, you select the *Flowchart Wizard*, it guides you through the process of creating a flowchart and of choosing page size, orientation and other layout features.

The *OrgChart Wizard* is particularly useful. It can automatically generate an organisational chart from data provided via a specially prepared text file or Microsoft Excel workbook, allowing you more time to enhance the appearance of the diagram.

I should not pass over the *Office layout Wizard* without comment either,

as it enables me to point out that both the Wizard and its template are designed for the creation of layout plans drawn to scale, using either the imperial or metric systems.

A number of other Wizards are available to you as *add-ons* while you are using the program. *Graphmaker* enables you to create stretchable or stackable shapes for use in charts or graphs. For example, you can use a stretchable arm to more effectively represent growth in a chart, or use columns of stackable dollars or people to illustrate budgetary or population variations.

If you have associated numerical properties, such as cost, duration or resources with your shapes, you can use the *Property Reporting Wizard* to perform calculations and generate reports.

With the *SmartShape Wizard* you can change the way existing Visio shapes (or shapes you've created) will behave. Thus, you can associate custom data or properties with a shape, change the position of its text block, add a control handle that determines text block position, add standard connection points, or set protection behaviour that prevents a shape from being modified in certain ways.

The *Stencil Report Wizard* enables you to print copies of Visio stencils. You decide how many shapes to print per page, whether or not to separate them with grid lines, whether or not to include headers or footers in the report and what information about the shapes should be included.

Finally, you may use the *Region Building Wizard* to combine selected shapes into appropriately sized geographic regions.

Windows compliance

Visio fully meets the guidelines for Windows 95 set by Microsoft—the abundance of Wizards exemplifies this. Complete OLE support is provided, plus

consistent user interface characteristics and multitasking capabilities. I prepared this review in a DOS-based program while Visio was running, together with a screen grabber program, without any problems.

In common with all the good Windows-compliant programs these days, the mouse pointer hovering above a button for a second or two will reward you with the description of the particular button, so you can quickly become familiar with the available commands.

Right mouse-click actions give you context-sensitive menus. When clicked above a shape, for example, you can cut, copy or duplicate the shape, directly access the View, Format or Shape menus, access the specific shape Help or call up the Custom Property dialog box.

You will be mainly using the left mouse button, though, first, to drag and drop the shapes, change their dimensions and so on, secondly, to change the tool to pencil, connector, text or rotation for supportive actions and thirdly, to flip, rotate or align the shapes.

Other attributes

Visio offers a *SpellChecker* which you can optionally install, or you may use a standard dictionary which you have already installed.

You can share files with other programs that use CGM, PCX, PICT, BMP/DIB, EPS, TIFF or WMF formats. You can also import files from CorelDRAW 3, 4 or 5, Micrografx Designer, Windows Draw and Charisma.

Conclusion

I found this program to be very comfortable and smooth to work with and logical in its actions. If you really find that you need more shapes, you will find a collection of shapes and add-ons for Visio 4 available for sale from the Visio website at <http://www.visio.com/solutions>.

Borland IntraBuilder 1.0

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Richard Solly



**a step towards
converting all
computing
to one giant
Web experience**

Increasingly new generations of Internet Users are depending upon a single program, their web browser. Microsoft's Bill Gates has stated that HTML format will replace the current Windows HLP help format files. Borland has joined the HTML bandwagon with its IntraBuilder, a sets of tools that makes it easier for Web script programmers to make data that is currently available in various desktop and client/server data formats accessible via web browsers.

The IntraBuilder suite of programs consists of two fundamental components, three if you include the Borland database engine.

The first component is the Designer in an integrated design environment (IDE) package. This has a very similar look to Borland dBASE for Windows and Paradox in a multidocument interface (MDI), to be available shortly in MS Visual Basic 5.

You can do most major tasks, including creating home pages, application forms, linking database tables, and creating output reports using inbuilt, expert wizards. In the case of queries, this is an updated version of Query Builder initially released in Delphi 1.0. You can further modify a form's appearance using the more than 25 visual property builders. It's through these that an object's properties, such as font, type and colour can be fine tuned.

The second component is the IntraBuilder Application Server. A copy of this server is required in memory for each user accessing a database using a web browser. For the developer, this is a passive component, but it requires 1 MB of memory for each concurrent user of the databases via IntraBuilder web pages.

The IntraBuilder Application Server is not a web server in its own right. A separate web server from Borland, Netscape or Microsoft is also required. The IntraBuilder Application Server is best considered as the link between the web server and the databases or database engines.

IntraBuilder is available in three versions, Standard, Professional and Client/Server Edition.

IntraBuilder Standard includes the IDE Designer, an Application Server, which accommodates a single database user at

a time, a licenced copy of Netscape Gold (web browser) and Borland's Personal Web Server, which provides a web server on the development computer.

IntraBuilder Professional includes Netscape Gold, Netscape's FastTrack Web Server for NT and the Borland Web Server. The application server accommodates multiple instances of itself, thus enabling multiple users to connect to databases, concurrently. Connectivity support for Borland's remote InterBase database management system is also provided, as is support for Microsoft's SQL Server and Back Office products. The professional edition also provides support for web server APIs and common gateway interfaces (cgi).

The Client/Server Edition (not covered in this review) has all the features of the Professional Edition, plus native drivers for additional, larger database management systems including Informix, Sybase and Oracle. It also provides additional support for multilayered applications and distributed processing.

Installation

Installation of the IDE Design components and entries for the Borland Web Server were well handled by a version of the now almost standard Windows installation wizard. A small start-up manual guides you through starting the IDE Designer and developing script for building a link to a database. In this case it was the dBASE format, being one of the most common formats, read by almost all database engines. Within 30 minutes I had a web page with read and write links to a database as shown in Figure 1.

In this form, the buttons shown are default buttons added by the wizard. You can drag and drop these buttons in to the form (and consequently the screen) and modify visual properties using object property wizards. All default buttons performed the function indication in the button captions with respect to the database.

The basic code generated by the Designer is JavaScript. The opening section for the screen shown in Figure 1 is shown in Listing 1.

The code is comparable with standard JavaScript with the addition of IntraBuilder extensions. One of the

positive aspects of the IntraBuilder is a learning tool and guide for JavaScript. As you develop proficiency in the language you can modify and test the script directly within the development environment.

In moving to more complex examples, Borland recommends using the provided examples as templates. You can load the examples in the IDE Designer and modify them, either using the wizards or directly by editing the underlying JavaScript. A web page screen from a mutable Paradox database is shown in Figure 2. This is an example of the attractive screens you can create with IntraBuilder. The example provides full read capability, links to the multiple tables and password protected editing scripts.

Figure 3 is another example of the type of attractive web screens you can create easily using IntraBuilder. It's a guest book, one of the more common scripts available to web servers.

Summary

For individuals interested in developing Web pages with JavaScript and those wishing to develop scripts to make information collected in databases available through web pages, the Standard

Edition represents excellent value. The retail price for the complete Standard Edition IntraBuilder (about \$100) is comparable to that for the bundled Netscape Gold alone. However the limitation, of one current user of linked databases, is a major one except for personal use or with the smallest Intranet.

The Professional Edition is the one that would find immediate application on a small- to medium-size Intranet or an Internet site that does not require a large number of concurrent users accessing the database. I didn't find a limitation on the number of IntraBuilder application server images that could be run in memory (one is required for each concurrent user accessing the databases with a Web browser). However because all copies of the IntraBuilder Server image must be loaded into memory at start-up and each consumes about 1 MB of memory, the number of concurrent users will be limited by the server's memory. Larger Intranets could be accommodated by using multiple web servers. As with the Standard Edition, the Professional Edition is excellent value, with its retail price comparable to that for the bundled Netscape Gold and Netscape FastTrack Web server for NT.

Conclusion

The availability of tools such as Borland's IntraBuilder is another step towards converting all computing to one giant Web experience. Scripts can be readily developed to enable most database procedures, including reading, editing and adding to the database, to be carried out from a common Web browser. The browser, and thus the interface, is the same whether the information was collected originally in dBASE, Paradox or Access formats, or even Informix, Sybase or Oracle formats, in the case of the higher end product. Minimal training is required to enable staff to access database information using a web server.

Although IntraBuilder is primarily aimed at the NT platform, components provided in the Standard and Professional editions

```
// IntraBuilder generated Code for Quick Start example //
var f = new qstartForm();
f.open();
class qstartForm extends Form {
  with (this) {
    height = 17;
    left = 9;
    top = 0;
    width = 57.5;
    title = "Qstart";
    pageno = 0;
  }

  with (this.qstart1 = new Query()){
    left = 52;
    top = 0;
    sql = 'SELECT * FROM "C:\\IntBuild\\APPS\\testapps\\qstart.dbf"';
    active = true;
  }
}
```

Listing 1

Figure 1.

operate equally well under Windows 95.

The product appears well suited to providing easy access to data collected in databases via Web browsers in small to medium sized Intranets and Intranet web sites, and for Internet Web sites in which the number of users concurrently accessing a database is small. However, for medium to large Intranet or Internet sites, the necessity for a separate IntraBuilder server image (and its requirement of 1 MB memory for each concurrent user) can be a serious limitation. Overall, the product represents excellent value for money.

If you are interested in developing your knowledge of JavaScript or exploring ways to make information collected in databases available via a web browser, I recommend you download the one-month, trial version of IntraBuilder available via the Internet from Borland's web site (<http://www.borland.com/>). □

Info Box

Borland IntraBuilder

Minimum system requirements

- 80486/33 processor
- 12 MB RAM (16 MB for NT)
- Windows 95 or Windows NT 3.51
- CD-ROM drive
- 30 MB of hard disk space
- Graphics adapter card (VGA, Super VGA or other Windows-compatible card), capable of displaying at least 256 colours at 640 x 480 resolution
- Windows-compatible mouse

Availability and cost

Distributed by
Tech Pacific Pty Ltd
Level 9, 420 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
Ph: (03) 9205 6222
Web: <http://www.borland.com/>
Available at Software Express and Computer Resellers
RRP:

- Standard Edition \$139 (\$99 promotional)
- Professional Edition \$699 (\$559 promotional)
- Client/Server Edition \$2795

Phone	Fullname	Department	Phonenote
x3212	Abraham N. Kahn	Development	Check out my new home page
x3203	David Lynn	Development	
x3223	Andrew J. Blair	President's Office	In Germany this week
x3217	David H. Brown	Development	
x3204	Chris M. Brown	Engineering	
x3205	Victor L. Cook	President's Office	
x3224	Yan L. Jiang	Quality Assurance	
x3228	Andrew J. Brown	Technical Support	
x3220	David L. Watson	Development	

Figure 2.

We're glad you visited our site today. Please be kind enough to leave a record of your visit. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Your full name:

Email address:

Where are you from?

☐ Is this your first visit?

Comments:

Figure 3.

GAME REVIEW

Bob Burt



plenty of

fun for

arcade-

loving

addicts

Distress signals reverberate throughout the Galaxy, the evil Dorf Command has just touched down on another hapless planet. Dorf Troopers are advancing on the Golden City, intent on destroying it and claiming the planet. Who possesses the skill, courage and quick wit needed to defeat KingDorf deep in the bowels of his command ship? Who can single-handedly save the entire Galaxy from eternal slavery? Who?

Would you believe it—the answer is *you*, or your game-play alter-ego, the teenaged *SpaceDude*, hopeful hero of the Galaxy!

After the Dorfs land on a planet, they advance on the Golden City in their extraordinarily tank-like Hoppers. Your objective is simple to describe, but not so easy to attain—you need to find and defeat KingDorf before his Hoppers destroy the city. You win if and when you drive the Dorfs from the planet, but if just one Hopper reaches the Golden City, you lose.

Not surprisingly, you will find many obtrusive obstacles and heart-rending hazards in the way of scintillating success. You will need to develop some special skills. For example, the game commences with you as *SpaceDude* surfing the ozone as you descend to the planet. You must press the left or right keys to keep your board level and prevent a wipe out, resulting in a tumble to the surface of the planet. You'll certainly need to practise this to achieve even this small success.

Whenever you see the *Strategy Map*, you are in the Golden City and recovering from your last mission. *Travel Time* is counting down at the top of the screen, during which Hoppers leave the Command Ship and advance on the Golden City. You use your mouse, joystick or keypad to move the *Marker* around the Map. A number below the marker represents the travel time needed to reach the underlying point on the map. Words which will at times appear above the marker

represent mission tasks, which you activate with a button click or by pressing Enter:

- **Defend**—build a *Defence Post* at the marker.
 - **Repair**—the number above the marker signifies the current strength of the Defence Post it is over and permits you to add to it.
 - **Attack**—the marker is over a Hopper or at the entrance to the Command Post. When over a Hopper, the number above it represents its strength.
 - **Capture**—if two or more Hoppers are in the same area, you can try to capture one. If successful, you can use it to fight the other Hoppers.
- In a Defence Post, which can be built only on open ground, you can fight a Hopper without travelling. You tow the material needed to build it on a barge, thwarted by hazards along the way. Each hit decreases the starting strength of the post and when you reach your destination, the structure is built out of the residual material.



Figure 1. The Strategy Map.



Figure 2. The Golden City.

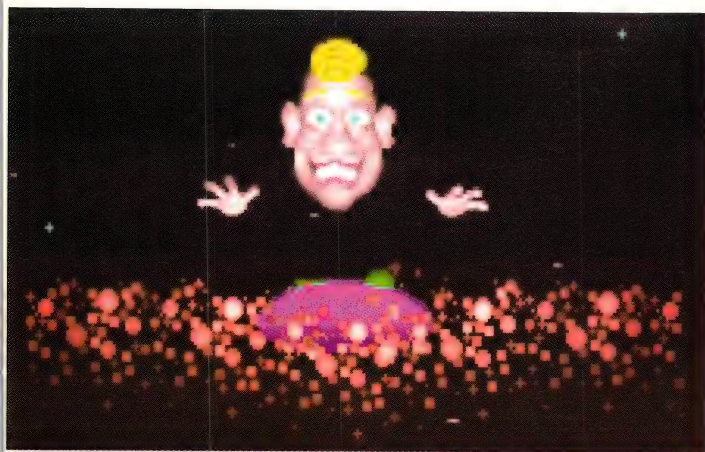


Figure 3 (above). Surfing the ozone.



Figure 4 (right). Making a splash.

Attacks on a Hopper are not one-sided. Whilst you are approaching the Hopper you are in the shooting phase, so make the most of it, as, when you fly past, it is the Hoppers turn to attack. Alternating action follows.

While you are fighting Dorf Troopers from inside a captured Hopper, an arrow key number shows how many Troopers remain, whilst if you are attacking another Hopper, you are shown the number of hits the Hopper can endure before being destroyed.

On the Strategy Map, the Dorf Command Ship stronghold looks remarkably like a mechanical spider. If you elect to attack and enter the ship, an arrow key number shows you how many Troopers remain, the time left in a particular sequence, or the number of hits KingDorf can take. You'll normally require more than one attempt to destroy the Command Ship. Fortunately, return attempts to destroy the ship acknowledge any previous damage you made.

In practice, you will find you need to divide your time between attacking the

Command Ship and protecting the Golden City from Hopper attacks. The slickest strategy is probably to set up Defence Posts near the city and at other strategic points and attack the Command Ship first, delaying attack on the Hoppers until they are closer to the city, when the travel sequences will be much easier.

The game adjusts to your abilities. Thus if you win a game, the next will be harder, while after a loss, the next game is easier. Further, each *scene* actually responds to difficulty experiences. So your playing patterns are regularly analysed and countered. Take nothing for granted!

The CD-ROM version has one great advantage over the same program available on 3.5-inch floppies. It will run quite smoothly from the disc, without the need for installation, which otherwise will use up over 9 MB of hard disk space.

There is plenty of fun for arcade-loving addicts here, without the need to leave the home computer. □

Info Box

Space Dude

Minimum system requirements

- 486 IBM-PC or compatible computer
- 500 KB RAM
- VGA 256 colour Graphics
- Hard disk drive
- MS-DOS 3.0 or higher
- SoundBlaster, Pro-Audio or equivalent sound card
- CD-ROM Drive (for CD-ROM version)

Availability and cost

Distributed in Australia/New Zealand by

Manacomm Pty Ltd

Ph: (07) 3870 4900

Fax: (07) 3870 9440

RRP: \$39.95

Available at major games and educational software stockists, including Myer/Grace Brothers and Harvey Norman Stores

Classification: General (all ages)



Figure 5. A munching monster.



Figure 6. In the Command Ship.

Corel All-Movie Guide 2



CD-ROM REVIEW

Robin Howells

a huge data-
base of film
and video

When Bob Burt reviewed the first release of the Corel All-Movie Guide (*PC Update*, November 1995) it was described by Corel as "The Ultimate Guide to the Movies." Having spent over a day investigating the second release, I think it is wise that Corel has dropped that claim now.

That line has been replaced by the blander statement "100,000 Movies and Video References on CD-ROM."

Having access to such an extensive repository of information is absolutely irresistible to a dedicated film fan like me—who regularly visits the Internet Movie Database site on the www checking on details of films old and new.

Installation

Installing the program via Windows 95 is effortless and if you have the auto-run feature enabled you just need to click the Run button to load the program. Then you are at the Video Store, which gives you access to all the search facilities in the Corel All-Movie Guide 2 (CAMG2).

The interface to the program is far from intuitive and is rather reminiscent of a "Magical Mystery Tour." For instance, the Information monitor takes you to a list of all the movies in the database. A poster to the right of the popcorn machine accesses a list of all movies that are accompanied by a movie poster or a photograph. Click on the monitor to the left of the Information monitor and it'll display a list of all the famous people in the database and their photos. Other objects hide other information which can be ascertained by placing the mouse cursor over them. This is all explained in the accompanying booklet, but in use appears involved and not user friendly. This contrasts with a competitive product I often use, which has a well-designed and logical interface.

Categories

When you want information on a particular type of film you choose from the 16 categories on the video shelf display to see the full list in each. The categories are Features, Recent, Horror, Documentary, Television, Action, Comedy, Drama, Mystery, SciFi, Classics, Western, Crime, War, Children and Music.

Reliability test

To test the reliability and comprehensiveness of CAMG2, I first carried out a keyword search for "Aborigine" and the program claimed it could only find 25 occurrences. Looking through the films listed, it was immediately apparent to me that one of Australia's most under-rated films which deals with the tragedy of our local Aborigines was not found. Although *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* is in the database, the keyword search had not located it. It did manage to remind me of many other fine films like *Manganinnie*, *Jedda*, *The Last Shout* and *Romper Stomper*.

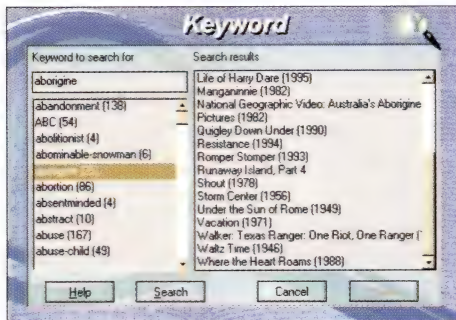


Figure 1. Not everything is "on-topic."

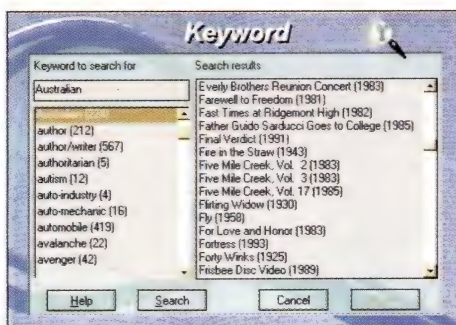


Figure 2. Some "Australian" titles.

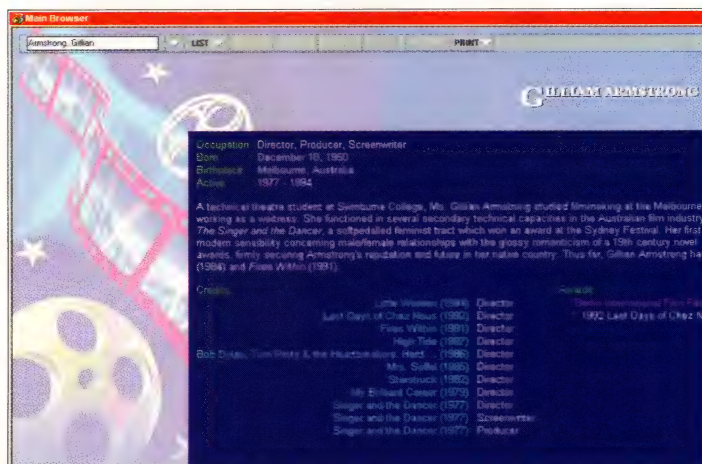


Figure 3. Detail on Gilliam (sic) Armstrong

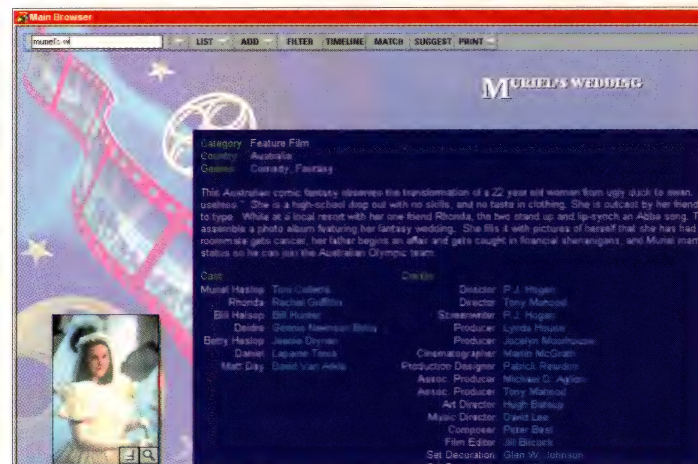


Figure 4. Results of searching for "Muriel's W"

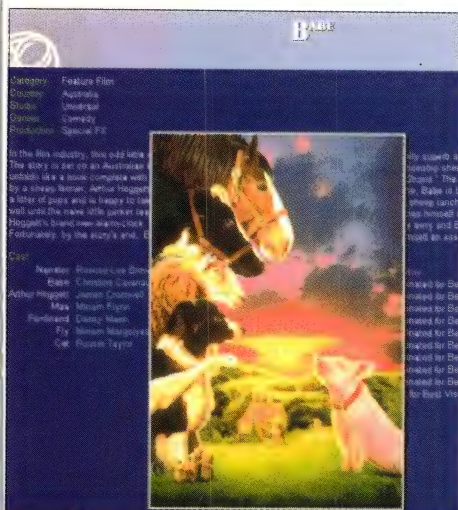


Figure 5. Some entries have associated stills.

Of the 25 films listed only 12 matched the keyword "Aborigine". The other 13, or just over 50 percent appear to me to have no connection with Australia and its aborigines. These included such rib-ticklers as the 1956 USA drama *Storm Center*, starring Bette Davis; the *Frisbee Disc* video, *The Vacation from Italy* and *Under The Sun of Rome*.

Australia

Because Australian films and their directors are making an impact worldwide, I decided to do a further test. Doing a keyword search for "Australia" I was interested to see 224 occurrences listed. Perusing the titles thrown up made me think I must have mistyped the word, so I entered it again. Same result—and so many of them were both quirky and unreliable.

It listed films from all over the world that appear to have no connection whatsoever with Australia. These included such weird suggestions as the *Everley Brothers Reunion Concert*, a documentary shot at the Royal Albert Hall, a 1938 USA film *Start Cheering*, the 1973 French film *La Grande Boueffe*, *Backpacking America*, *I Pagliacci*, *Montana* (a USA Western) and the USA comedy *Cactus Flower* starring Goldie Hawn. But there were some notable exclusions. It did **not** find *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* nor the film *Vacant Possession*, although both are in the database and mention "Australia" in the plot outlines! Yet it did list *Under The Sun of Rome*, a 1949 Italian film that appears to have no connection. There are at least six others like *Walker: Texas Ranger*, *Waltz Time* and *Storm Centre* in his list which are questionable "finds".

When you search for a list of Australian films using a globe almost hidden as an icon near the base of the video store counter, the results are quite different. It then reports 592 movies in the list, although there are a number of notable titles missed.



Figure 6. Rotating the globe (top right) brings up different countries, and lists of their films.

Corel replies

Concerned that there may be some feature in CAMG2 that I misunderstood, I e-mailed Corel in Canada explaining the problems I had unearthed with the keyword search function and asked if they were aware of its limitations.

Corel replied, "The problem you asked about has to do with the Database. If the word you are searching has not been entered as a keyword then it will not come up in the search. This means that if a word appears in the plot outline but is not entered as a keyword it will also not come up in a search. If movies come up that seem to have nothing to do with the search word it may be that the word was incorrectly entered as a keyword for that movie. These are problems with the database which we license from All-Movie Guide. We make sure to pass on all the errors which have been reported, and I will pass on yours."

Further tests

After reading this reply I decided to look more thoroughly into the Australian content of the CD-ROM. The 224 titles in the keyword search includes that 70s sex romp *Alvin Purple*, but does not list *Alvin Purple Rides Again*. Both are in the database and acknowledged as Australian films!

To see how up-to-date it is I searched and found a synopsis of *Vacant Possession*, which was not available at the *Internet Movie Database* (IMD) <http://us.imdb.com/>. Looking for the latest Australian movie releases using the timeline feature unearthed *Shine* (1996) and *Angel Baby* (1995).

Reading about our own director Gillian Armstrong, I was disappointed to find that in giving details of some of her films her name is spelt as *Gillian*. In discussing her first short film *The Singer and The Dancer*, the Guide gives the year it was made as both 1976 and 1977. A similar annoying error is made with New Zealander Jane Campion's internationally acclaimed *The Piano*. We are told it was made in 1992 and 1993. The correct year is 1993.

Info Box

Corel All-Movie Guide 2

It runs under Windows 3.1x/95/NT or Macintosh

Minimum system requirements for Windows 95

- 486DX-66 CPU
- 8 MB RAM
- 9 MB hard disk space
- Graphics: 640 x 480, 256 colours
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive
- 8-bit Sound Blaster or 100 percent compatible sound card
- Mouse and speakers

Availability and cost

Widely distributed to computer retailers large and small.

RRP: \$44

Because I was also interested to find a plot outline for the first feature film of German director, Percy Adlon, *The Last Five Days*, I was delighted to read the details immediately. This information could not be found on the IMD nor anywhere else on the Internet, when I searched for it days before.

Conclusions

If you want a huge database of film and video from which to choose "a nice night's home viewing", CAMG2 will throw up lots of information to allow you to select from a range of categories. If you are a serious film buff who wants accurate, reliable information about films, directors, films from particular countries and keyword searches you can rely on, you may need to investigate other sources of information. Greater attention to checking detail and proofreading the information already contained in the database is needed before CAMG2 becomes a "Must Buy" for me.

One advantage for buyers is that quarterly updates to the Guide are available on the Internet. The first one is already online and contains information on over 600 new additions to the movie database. The file is MGUPD201.EXE and is 1898 KB. Point your browser at the Corel home page <http://www.corel.com>.

About the author

Robin Howells has been a keen moviegoer since his school days when he attended Saturday afternoon matinees at the *Adelphi* during World War II. He belongs to two film societies, one of which—the Melbourne Film Society—is the oldest in Australia. It was formed 53 years ago and he has been a member for 23 years.

Random access

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

John Swale



Answers received

From: David Foster: Yes you can have a true dual boot for Win 95 and DOS/Win 3.x. The two solutions offered in the February issue do work but use the Win 95 version of DOS (DOS 7) and thus may not work with all programs. I do not think you can run Win 3.x that way. Also it is a nuisance when you exit a program to have Win 95 boot up whether you want it or not. A solution to dual booting is set out in my article in *PC Update*, May 1996. The article refers to using the F8 key. This requires stepping through the boot sequence. If you use the F4 key, it will go through the boot sequence automatically.

From: Stan Rosenthal: Thought you might be interested to know of a more costly (but probably less frustrating) solution to the problem of handling configuring Netscape under Windows95 when you have more than one ISP. A shareware program called Netscape Provider Maintenance (NSPVM), which I heard of from a fellow Melb PC member on a newsgroup, operates very effectively and simply. Once you have the program, you configure Netscape as you need it for each ISP and save it within NSPVM, from which you can then launch the correctly configured Netscape for each ISP. It can be obtained at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/M_Wolf. One last tip—it only remains active for 21 days, and unless you can pay via Compuserve, you will find that the slowness of the payment method means that you get locked out of it, and have to return to the old manual methods of customised configuring, just as you got used to the ease of NSPVM.

In February, you replied to a query re Win 95 losing Dial-Up passwords by suggesting that people Uninstall/Reinstall Dial-Up Networking. I have had this problem a number of times—that seemingly corrupts my Password file (xxxxxxx.pwl where xxxxxx is the Logon-ID I use) in c:\Windows, and find that just by renaming/deleting that file, it then gets recreated on next use, and then returns to saving the Dial-Up networking passwords.

David Hill (davidh@melbpc.org.au) and Peter Grant (peterlg@connect4.com.au) have copies of the Epson GQ3500 documentation which can be borrowed.

Questions and answers

- Q** The Spell checker on Word 7 used to work properly (including the automatic underlining of the errors) but now it doesn't work on checking capital letters. What file do I need to get it back?
- A** Use **TOOLS|OPTIONS** then **Spelling** tab. Then click the appropriate check box for automatic spell checking and for **Ignore Capital letters**.
- Q** When using **DEFRAG** I find a large lost cluster that cannot be moved. I have recently installed Windows 3.11. Could this have caused it?
- A** There is a large permanent swap file created by Windows 3.11 and some created by DOS. If you do a **DIR /AH /S** you will see all the hidden files in all directories. There should only be 3 or 4. You should run **SCANDISK** before **DEFRAG** to get rid of lost clusters.
- Q** Following an accident I need to modify the keyboard layout so the Esc and Caps Lock keys are transferred to the bracket keys. Is there some software to help?
- A** There is shareware available and you can visit the Microsoft web site and look for **Kernel Toys** for Windows 95.
- Q** I am trying to use **XTree Gold** for DOS under Windows 95 but it hangs when trying to access drive A: and I have to reboot. Other drives are OK.
- A** Most likely this is a floppy drive problem as other people have not encountered a similar problem.
- Q** I use **Zmodem** to download files from the BBS because of its restart capability. I downloaded a large file for 1 hour and then got thrown off. Next time I logged on to complete the download, I could not because the whole file download time exceeds my remaining allowance even though I only wanted to complete the download of the small part remaining.
- A** 1: Wait until the next day when your time is back to maximum.
- A** 2: You could ask another family member to use their account and download the file. (Extra family memberships cost only \$10 per year, and provide all the normal benefits of membership—BBS, Internet access, training courses and so on, except that only one copy of *PC Update* is mailed to the family address.)

- Q** Windows 95 will not save the password when I log on to the Internet or other dialup network.

A 1: Shut down Windows 95. This gives an option that says "Close all programs and log on as a new user?" This gives a window with the existing user name. Change the name to the name used for the Internet with no password. Click **OK** twice. Windows 95 now knows the user and will let you save a password when you use **Dial-Up Networking**.

A 2: See **Answers Received** above.

- Q** When I defrag a SCSI hard disk it stops half way and says the FAT is faulty or the clusters are faulty. I fix it and run **SCANDISK**. It does not find it but if you run it 3 to 4 times it finds it again. So I cannot mark the bad clusters.

A The disk is probably about to fail catastrophically. I don't think you are moving the clusters but getting new bad ones. Backup the files and get a new hard disk.

Unanswered question

- Q** From Leighton West: Can anyone direct me to a scalable terminal font which will work in Hyperterminal and properly display ASCII characters used by the BBS. [Ed: do you mean ANSI—AN]

Over to You

Please contact me if you have any comments on the answers given; can provide a reply for the unanswered questions; or if you cannot attend the monthly meeting and would like a question asked and included in this column.

To contact me: write to me care of the office; leave a message on the BBS or telephone me on
(03) 9270 6115 BH
(03) 9857 5567 AH
or e-mail me at jswale@melbpc.org.au

Note: Please contact commercial distributors before asking a question here. In all cases mention version numbers.

The Story of Mrs Quack

EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE

Bernadette Houghton



Mrs Quack will appeal most to a younger set of readers

The Story of Mrs Quack is one of a series of educational CDs based upon the classic Peter Cottontail stories by Thornton Burgess. In this tale, Peter Cottontail and his friends shelter a duck wounded by hunters.

Info Box

The Story of Mrs Quack

Minimum system requirements

- 486DX/33 processor
- 4 MB free RAM (in practice this means 8 MB)
- Windows 3.1
- VGA display with 256 colours
- Sound card
- CD-ROM
- 7 MB free hard disk space

Availability and cost

RRP \$49.95

Available at major game and educational stockists, including Myer, David Jones and Harvey Norman.

Distributed by Manacomm

Ph: (03) 9569 6377

Fax: (03) 9569 9641

For nearest reseller phone 0055 12685

Acknowledgement

Thanks to Liz Flaherty, Primary Teacher and Education Consultant, for advice on the educational aspects of the program.

Mrs Quack has the appearance of a real book, with luxurious red leather binding, marbled end-papers, personalised book-plate and contents page. As you turn the pages, the story appears on the left, with a colour cartoon on the right. You can read the story on your own or listen to it narrated, with two levels of difficulty. As the story proceeds, the words are highlighted line-by-line. Or, you can click on the cartoon to bring the story to life. The host, Mr Know-it-Owl, guides you through the book and helps out when you get stuck. Apart from the story and cartoon, activities include:

- Peter's Puzzler, a jigsaw puzzle.
- Dot-to-Dot, where you connect the numbers or letters to create a character from the story.
- Clone Zone, a memory match game.
- Character Crazies, where you create weird and wonderful characters using The body parts of the story characters.
- Tale Twisters, where you select from a list of rhyming words to make up a nonsense story.
- Peter's Paint Book, a colouring book with blank pages for original artwork.

Mrs Quack has some worthwhile activities, but tries to cater for too wide an age group; according to the press release, its intended market is preschoolers to 10-year-olds. Consequently, many activities require an incongruous mix of skills. The story, for example, will appeal most to younger kids (3 to 6 years), yet the language is more appropriate for older children (8 to 10 years). Similarly, Dot-to-Dot requires very short, precise mouse movements that may be beyond the

capability of the younger set. Patrick—at 4 years old—can follow the dots but lacks the fine mouse control needed to connect them.

While most activities have limited choices, as a parent I'm aware that young kids thrive on familiarity (I can recite The Cat in the Hat by heart!). And so it turns out—Patrick doesn't care that the jigsaw, for example has only 2 scenes, and Dot-to-Dot draws the same few characters time after time. The cartoon—which runs for 24 minutes—is of poor quality, but this doesn't seem to bother him, either; older readers may be more discerning.

The Story of Mrs Quack will appeal most to a younger set of readers (ages 3 to 6), with parental help needed for some activities. While it has questionable value as a tool for learning to read, with inappropriate, stilted language and poor word highlighting, it's a nice story and the activities are fun. Patrick enjoyed it, but I noticed that it was very much an "out of sight, out of mind" program. □



Figure 1. Mrs Quack story screen.



Figure 2. Clone Zone.



Figure 3. Peter's Paint Book.

Peter's PC Update Puzzle

WIN A COREL CD-ROM



Peter Smith

These puzzles are designed to be solved without using a computer—if a bird-brain can write them, another bird-brain can solve them!

Solve the puzzles (you may use plain paper or a photocopy—you do not need to mutilate your *PC Update*) and send your entry to
Peter's PC Update Puzzle

March
PO Box 14

to arrive by Monday 31 March.

We'll publish the solutions and the winner in the May *PC Update*. February's solutions and winner will be in the April magazine.

No, entries cannot be accepted by fax or e-mail; good old-fashioned snail-mail gives everyone an equal opportunity and won't clog up my e-mail or fax! Also please don't send entries to the Melb PC office—they are busy enough.

Prize

This month's prize is a copy of the Corel CD *The Interactive Alphabet*, which Bernadete Houghton reviewed in the April 1996 issue of *PC Update*.

Strained Relations

At a local street gathering, six families, new to the area, were getting to know each other. Each family consisted of wife, son, daughter and husband. All the daughters' names start with **J** and all the husbands' names begin with **B**. The following conversations were overheard, all of which took place between total strangers. Who was in each family?

1. Olive told Edward:
"Bert is my husband."
2. Barry told Harry:
"Noeline's husband is Ben."
3. Prue said to Mary:
"My daughter is Joan."
4. "My son's name is George,"
Mary said to Kath.
5. "Jane's Dad isn't Ben,"
Olive told Harry.

6. Kath told Fred:
"Jill's Dad isn't Bill."
7. Joan told Bob:
"Jenny is 30."
8. June told Kath:
"My father is Brian."
9. Ian told Edward:
"Jean is David's sister."
10. Lynn told Edward:
"My daughter isn't June."
11. Bob told David:
"Jane's brother is Edward."
12. Fred told Joan:
"My father is Bill."

Perambulating Proverb

The proverb has its vowels left in place, but every consonant has been replaced by a number.

December's results

Owen Davies won December's CD-ROM.

Solution

5		1	2		3	8
6	4	2		7	8	0
	6	1	2		2	8
9			4	8		
1	4	4		5	2	1
	9	9	2		3	9
3	6		3	2	1	



Answer Grids

Strained Relations

[illegible]

Perambulating Proverb

i	1		i	2		i	3	3							
2	i	1	1	i	4	5		a	1		6	o	7	e	
a	4	8		2	1	6	i	9	i	4	5				
0	i	1	\$		1	\$	e		+	o	+	e			

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American Power Conversion for the supply of six uninterruptible power supplies for the Group's Communications Centre.

ACA Pacific for the donation of a Diamond Stealth Video card for *PC Update* production.

Computer Rebuilds for the supply of equipment for *PC Update* production and the group's communications centre.

Corel Corporation for copies of CorelDRAW! and Corel Ventura Publisher used in the production of *PC Update*.

Dell Computer for a Dell PowerLine 466SE PC to support the Internet service.

Hayes for the supply of modems for the group's Communications Centre.

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Microsoft for ongoing contributions.

SEALCORP Computer Products for the supply of equipment for the group's Communications Centre.

SONY Australia for the supply of equipment for *PC Update* production.

SEALCORP Computer Products for the supply of equipment for the group's Communications Centre.

Symantec for ongoing contributions. □

**Monthly meeting
All members and guests
welcome**

**Pharmacy College
381 Royal Parade
Parkville**

**6.00 pm
First Wednesday
each month except
January**

An average of over 500 members and guests attend our monthly meetings, which provide an excellent forum to introduce and release new products to those who are both users and decision makers. Meetings are arranged around planned themes. Members or presenters who are able to assist or contribute are invited to contact the convener.

Stan Johnstone Meetings convener
and administrator
Phone: (03) 9578 3091 BH
e-mail stanj@melbpc.org.au

Next meeting
5 March Communications
Lynn Pollock **The new Melb PC
Internet Kit**
Other presenters Topics to be advised

Plus:

The usual giveaways

Random Access

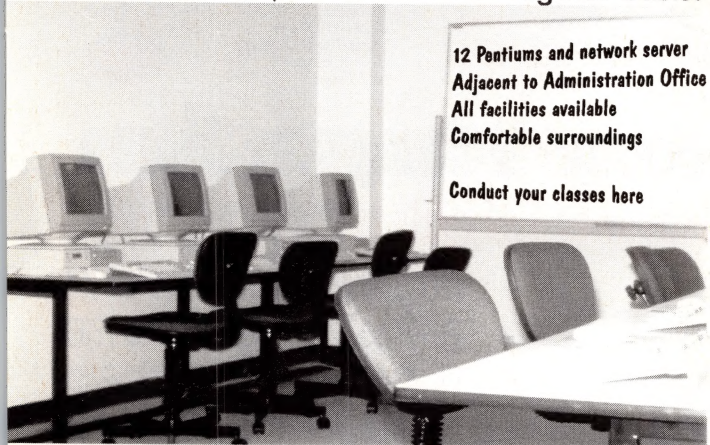
Shareware Library Sales

Socialising

**Don't
forget
the
Waffle
SIG
after the
meeting.**

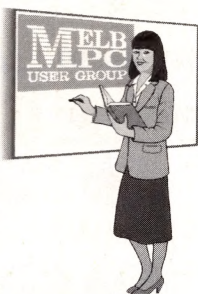
Need a Training Venue?

The Melbourne PC User Group Training Centre is available for rental, on a casual or regular basis.



12 Pentiums and network server
Adjacent to Administration Office
All facilities available
Comfortable surroundings

Conduct your classes here



For further
information contact:

Melbourne
PC User Group
Administration Office
2nd Floor
66 Albert Road
South Melbourne
VIC 3205
Ph: (03) 9699 6222
Fax: (03) 9699 6499

Membership

Do you have problems thinking of gifts for family, friends or colleagues?

The next time you're stuck, why not give them memberships in Melb PC?

PC Update, BBS, SIGs, Training, Internet, Dial Help, Monthly Meetings, Shareware, First Aid... all this and growing.

Anyone who uses a PC will benefit from membership of Melb PC.

**MELB
MPC
USER GROUP**

TECS Pentium Multimedia Systems

Genuine Intel Pentium CPU
Triton VX chipset 256K cache motherboard
16M of fast EDO RAM
1.44M floppy drive
Huge 2.1G mode4 enhanced IDE hard drive
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8X CD-ROM with Sound Blaster 16PnP and speakers
Microsoft mouse and pad / 104 keyboard
Choice of desk-top or mini-tower case

120MHz \$2159
133MHz \$2219
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166MHz \$2499

Following software is supplied and installed

- Windows 95b CD
- Microsoft Encarta 96
- Microsoft Works
- Microsoft Money
- Microsoft Creative Writer
- Microsoft CD Sampler
- VET 9.23 anti-virus software

(CD titles may vary according to availability)



Picture for illustration purpose only. Actual units will vary.

Connect to the world via the Internet

33.6K Fax/Modem with 10 hours internet access
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2 year parts & unlimited labour warranty. 1 year on-site warranty, FREE delivery and setup.*

* - Limited to Melbourne metropolitan areas only. Conditions apply.

Viewmaster Notebooks

75MHz \$2885 **133MHz \$3075**

Model 3510

Features:

- Genuine Intel Pentium CPU
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- Upgrade to 1.3Gb HDD \$100
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- Windows 95 \$140

2 year* return to base warranty!!

* - 1 year on screen, battery, & accessories

PentiumPro System

Specifications:

- Genuine Intel PentiumPro 200MHz CPU
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2 year parts and unlimited labour warranty!
1 year on-site warranty, FREE delivery and setup!*

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Budget Pentium Systems

120MHz \$1425 **150MHz \$1535** **166MHz \$1750**

Specifications:

- Genuine Intel Pentium CPU
- 16M of fast EDO RAM / 256K cache
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- 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- Windows 95

2 year parts and unlimited labour warranty!

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Netcomm 33.6K ext. **\$299**



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DeluxScan 21 **\$2395**

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Economical bubble jet printer
BJC-4200 **\$459**
Professional bubble jet printer

Colour flatbed scanner

Specifications:

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- Scan from 75 to 4800DPI!
- fast single pass scanning
- SCSI interface Included*
- TWAIN compatible

*also available with Parallel Port interface. Ideal for notebooks!



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Diamond Stealth 3D 2M EDO **\$169**
Diamond Stealth Edge 3D 2M VRAM **\$469**
Hercules Terminator 3D 2M EDO **\$269**
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- Microsoft mouse & pad
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- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
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- Microsoft CD bundle
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